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HIGH TIMES

No. 77 January '82

FEATURES	
Interview: Charles Bukowski by Silvia Bizio Charles Bukowski has been hailed as America's greatest living author. He began his writing career at age 50 (after putting in 15 years as a postal clerk) and has spent the time since apotheosizing a life of hooch, horses and whores and composing the occasional panegyric upon a bloody bowel movement	33
My War of 1939 by Charles Bukowski Hank Chinaski would rather sit in a cheesy hotel room, vomiting into a paper cup, than go to college and discuss the allegorical implications of Spenser's Faerie Queene. That's why we like him. And why you will, too	38
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Pleasures Covers 2 × , teacups and the Widelux camera

Visions Nick Ray remembered

Sounds Albion's jumping

Last Words Today is the first day of the rest of your Zippy Calendar



Cover photo by Connie Hansen



PLATO's Retreatists by P. Gregory Springer They call themselves hackers, the men and women who have offered up their humanity to the sterile printouts of the orange-dot plasma panels. For hours on end they sit alone punching out programs and receiving anonymous information, bathed in the glow of the computer fix.



The Last Run of the Helena Star, Part Two by Pedro Vera
We last left the crew of the Helena Star loaded down with 40 tons of primo Colombian marimba, slowly making their way up from the Caribbean to a rendezvous somewhere off the coast of southeastern Canada. "Buena suerte y buena mar," shout the line boys; "Gracias, la necesitamos," calls back Condorito from the wheel.

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HIGH TIMES

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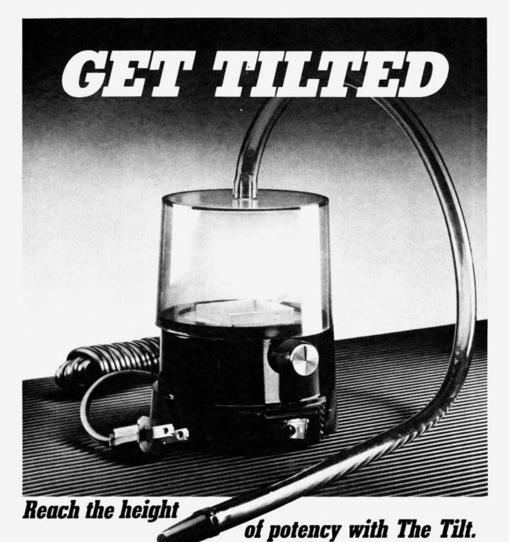
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realize that.

HIGH TIMES: What's been the biggest change you've had to deal with?

BENATAR: Losing anonymity was the biggest change. It was being recognized and having people come to your house and try and steal things from your front yard that was hardest to get used to. Having people all of a sudden want your physicalness, your watch, jewelry, hair—whatever. I remember the first time I was recognized in California, where I live. I pulled up in the car, I wasn't wearing makeup. I had sunglasses on and the store I was going to was near a high school and the kids were getting out of school. I was in the store and there were forty kids there also. I started to get nauseous. I started to get nervous and I said to one of the kids, "How could you possibly know it was me?" He goes, "Your lips, your lips, I'd know your lips anywhere." I knew this was over the edge.

HIGH TIMES: When did you first start singing? BENATAR: In school they find out when you're eight or so how much range you have or if you have a voice. They put me in choir when I was about twelve. I had a very big range for a kid my age so I received special treatment. My voice was so legit, I mean really classical, it was amazing, you wouldn't believe it. I was listening to the Beatles or the Rolling Stones and singing Puccini. My brother sounds like Pavarotti.

HIGH TIMES: I read somewhere that when you first started out you didn't want to dress up in the black leotards that have since become your trademark. Is that true?

BENATAR: It began as a Halloween joke, dressing in tights and boots. I was dressing up as this creature and I went onstage and sang. Because of the clothing, my attitude changed and the attitude went over so well that I said there must be something to this. So I tried it again. I was real timid about doing it but I kept on so I could get the attitude without the clothes. The clothes and the makeup is the release for me; it puts the other character out onstage 'cause the one

NE-DIMENSION.

sitting with you now is so different. This girl cannot rock. She gets up there and does sound check in sneakers and the voice comes out and it's the same voice but this girl is not rocking. As soon as I put the outfit on I get the attitude, I even stand different. HIGH TIMES: By "attitude," do you mean sexu-

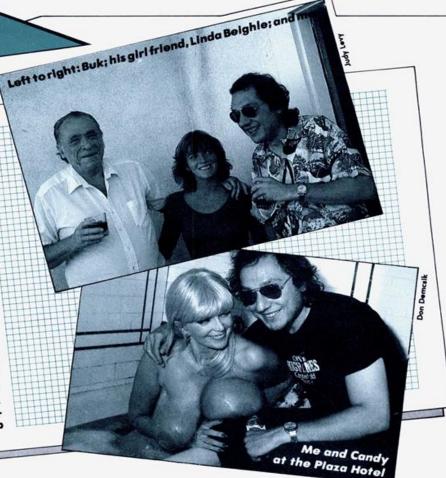
BENATAR: I didn't know it was so overtly sexual, until I saw it on videotape; then I got paranoid because that's not what I had intended. I only did it to get that powerstrength feeling, the aggression feeling I needed to have. Not that sexual feeling. I didn't know that if I put my leg on the monitor that people would lose their minds! When they started to exploit it I got really upset because it was never my intention to be real obvious. I want more dimension. I'm not a one-dimensional, cold-hearted bitch. HIGH TIMES: But when you get up onstage aren't you making a conscious decision to continued on page 13

HIGH TIMES: You rose from unknown to superstar in an incredibly short space of time. How have you handled the changes?

BENATAR: If it happens slowly, it's easier. Once it started it went like a blinding speed. No time to grow into the situations you're constantly confronted with. You start out and all of a sudden you have "Heartbreaker" go up the chart and then the next record comes in and jumps eighty places in the chart and you're not ready for that. Then when it goes to number two, you're certainly not ready for that. Then the third comes in and goes to number one, I mean you're just not ready. The band spends most of our time running behind what's happening to us, running to catch up. We're number one

ROAMIN' WITH SLOMAN

The backstabbing vermin. After all I've done for them they're tryin' to put me out to pasture. Sure they didn't call it that, publisher Kowl and his henchmen: They called it a vacation. I'd been working too hard, they said. I seemed tense and near the edge. Near the edge? You wimps, I'm on the edge, on the fuckin' edge where I belong, where you should be too! Getting telepathic messages from the dogs, using my kundalini energies and my astral body in unison, in order to keep bringing High Times fans the magazines they love to read! But the dolts just couldn't understand. So I took their vacation, but I didn't stop working. I flew out to California and met with Charles Bukowski (who understood perfectly), and he gave us an interview and an excerpt from a work in progress (see pages 33 and 38). Then I flew back to New York and interviewed porno sex goddess Candy Samples for "Midnight Blue," a local cable-TV show. And although I couldn't quite make her understand about the dogs and all, she did rub her left parabola against my knee.



AHH, IRONY

Well, it's happened to me again. But this time I got the last laugh. For the second time in five years my crop was ripped off. A few weeks ago I went out to water my fields only to find that some unscrupulous son of a bitch had made off with one of them—picked it clean. I was upset, to say the least. But what can you do? I finished watering the other fields and went home. Next day I read in the paper: "5 Charged with Harvesting Pot." Seems like the buggers who were ripping me off got popped in flagrante delicto! Talk about your instant karma.

Last Laugh Medina, Ohio

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

Editor:

I read with much interest your rather unique article entitled "Black Tuna: The Gang That Couldn't Deal Straight" [September '81]. While it was generally accurate and humorous, I would like to point out one factual error. I represented Gregory Francis Poulos in the Black Tuna trial. He was the only one of all the Black Tuna defendants who was acquitted of all counts by the jury. It is significant that every time an article is written on Black Tuna, my client's acquittal is overlooked and has yet to be reported in the national media.

-Joel Hirschhorn Miami. Fla.

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> —Thomas Gamble Iron City, Tenn.

Interesting idea; we're surprised no one thought of it before. Thanks—Ed.



PANAMA CITY, PANAMA A band of Indians wearing war masks and waving firebombs attacked and set fire to a Mr. Thomas Moody, American owner of the Villa Pider Tupo hotel, to protest the marijuana smoking and nude sunbathing that has been taking place at his establishment. The attack by the 22 angry young redmen also killed a Panamanian National Guardsman and seriously wounded two other soldiers.

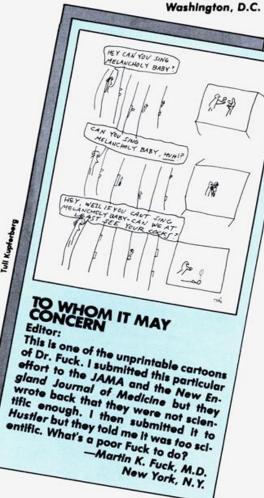
In an unrelated event about 50 New Delhi women took to the streets to protest the ever-rising frequency of young wives being burned to death by husbands dissatisfied with their dowry. The demonstration, sponsored by Indian Women Against Being Burned at the Stake, lasted for about six hours, during which time chants of "Sisterhood, not firewood" could be heard.

FORK YOU

Editor:

Here's a tip for tokers I'd like to turn you on to: A common kitchen fork doubles as the perfect roach clip. And it's especially great for guys with mustaches I it's safe, economical, resourceful and patriotic! If you're hip, you'll add a roach fork to your headset. (Keep it next to your cokespoon.)

-Miss Creant



EPISTLE TO "THE KID"

Editor:

A short note to the Cactus Kid regarding his August "Grow American" ["Arizona High-Ways"]. I can appreciate your pride and the earnest effort required to maintain your garden. However, as evidenced by the pictures of your plants, you haven't quite mastered the art of maximum yield per harvest. So here's a little hint, in the form of a poem:

Top, top, to steadily increase your

Those Arizona buds will produce their peak

If you fondle, love them and top them each week.

Now, once you see hair, on each new-grown top

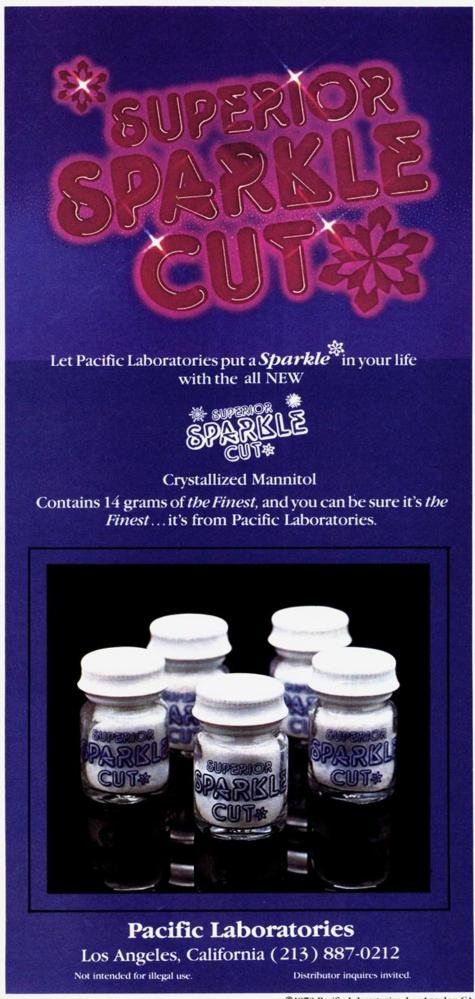
She's becoming a lady, and the smart farmer

Will stop.

Hope next year, Cactus is the best

But California's not movin', that's a safe bet.

> —The Cheese Santa Rosa, Calif.





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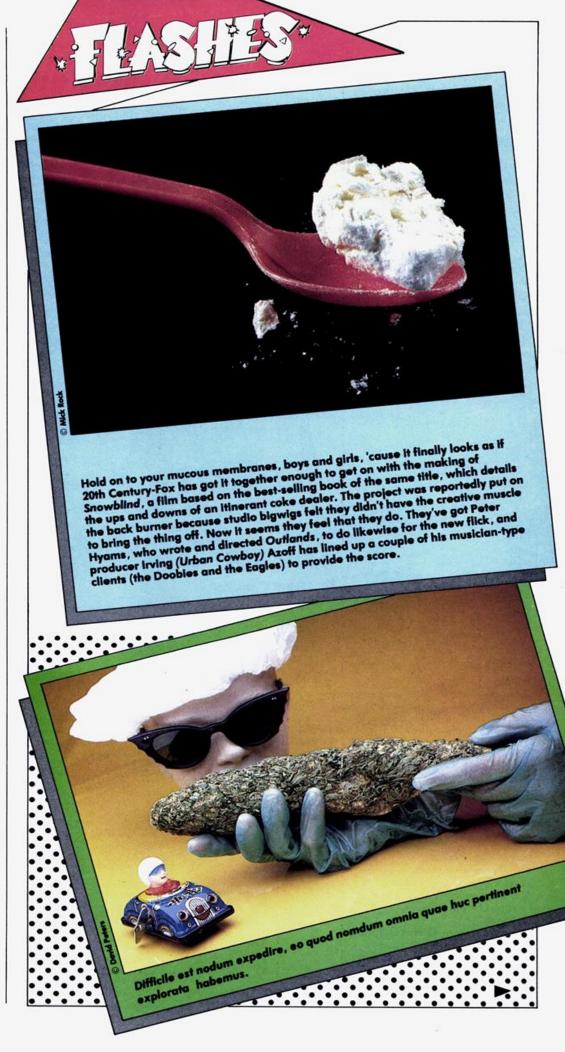
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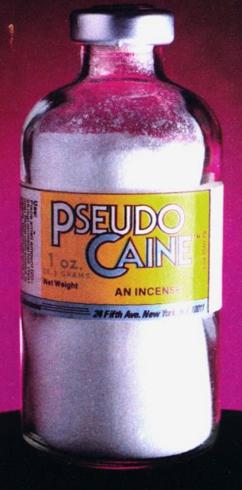
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UNSOLICITED TESTIMONIAL

I appreciated publisher Andy Kowl's remarks in "Flashes" [July '81]; judging from my own experience your mail-order problems are a thing of the past. I have now gotten all my back issues, plus your present of the Best of High Times, Volume One. I also received the binders I had previously ordered (thanks for sending an extra one). In fact, if you guys become any more efficient, I'm gonna start to get suspicious.

-Carol Shanahan Volcano, Hawali

BALLS WE HAVE KNOWN

Editor:

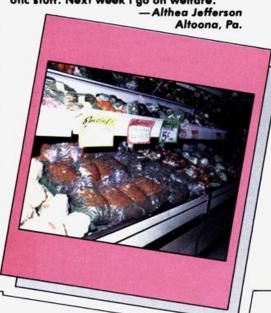
Did the Kinkster's scrot really fly tourist? Should have gone first class. I liked the story, mostly that he knows Robert Young personally. But then, I guess the Kinkster must rub gonads with a lot of has-beens.

> Bone Herring Wellesley, Mass.

LET 'EM SMOKE DITCHWEED

Editor:

As a single working mother, would someone please tell me how I'm supposed to provide marijuana for a family of four at these ridiculously inflated prices. Six months ago I took a second job rather than go on welfare, and with the kids pitching in we always managed to squeak by. But last week they raised the price of their lowest grade Mexican to \$500 a pound at my Shopway (three-quarters of which is usually seeds and stems), and that really got my dander up. I'm sick and tired of feeding my children Spam from the can while Nancy Reagan and her husband dine off \$200,000 Lenox china plates; I'm fed up with seeing them hock their portable home entertainment centers for just a taste of some crummy Mexican ditchweed, when rich folks are turning on with God knows what kind of exotic stuff. Next week I go on welfare.



PAT BENATAR

ntinued from page 7

play it tough and get that image across? BENATAR: I'm much better onstage being aggressive and tough than I am being soft. It's very difficult. It's like opening up too much. I want to learn how to do it, but it's taking time. I think now that I'm secure up there I could do it. At the Bottom Line I was frozenlike-a-stick scared.

HIGH TIMES: You said the second record was so hard because you were trying to imitate the success of your first, but the new one was much easier because you had a grasp

on what was happening.

BENATAR: The second record came at a bad time. You know, like Elvis Costello said, "You have your whole life to get ready for your first album and have five months to get your second." That's the way it is. We just get off a ten-month tour. We had two songs written; we were not prepared. Plus we changed producers and didn't know what to expect. On the third record we had seven songs written and you go into the studio feeling a lot better with seven than with two. Even though "Crimes of Passion" sold four and a half million, we were under pressure. But once we started working on it we forgot all about it. Not like the second one where I was thinking about it all the time; we have to have another "Heartbreaker"; I can't write another song like that. With this one I could care less, and when we finished, I really liked it. But I didn't care whether anyone bought it. It was the greatest feeling to be satisfied and not care commercially one way or another. HIGH TIMES: Who do you like that's around today?

BENATAR: I love Kate Bush; I think Chrissie Hynde has a great quality to her voice. I love guy bands. I love Elvis Costello, Springsteen, I like Squeeze a lot too. I like Ronstadt, not her material. I think she does great songs, but not for me, but I think she's a fantastic singer. She's got that great vulnerable quality that I don't have.

HIGH TIMES: What are some of the things

other than music that you enjoy? BENATAR: Me and Neil [Neil Geraldo, her lead guitarist] have dogs and stuff like that. We don't have a lot of time off so we don't get to go away. We love stuff like fishing, anything that's totally opposite of what we do. We stay home and just play house, watch TV, make barbecues, swim in the pool. I love to cook and he loves to eat so it's a great thing; it's like going to a psychia-trist. For a few months of the year I get to go home and be normal; you don't have to go through the problems of "am I a pretty girl?" HIGH TIMES: One last question: Is it fun being a rock 'n' roll superstar?

BENATAR: In the next five months we're having twenty-six covers coming out. Now this means I can't go to the grocery store anymore, no more 7-11s, no McDonalds. That's what it means. I cannot go, and it's real depressing. The adjustment to it is so difficult. But what we do every night is worth it no matter what anyone says. You get the money, you get the fame, you get the position, and all that bullshit that goes with it, the only thing that still matters is the ninety minutes that you're onstage. That's the only thing that you wait for all day, the only thing in your mind, the only thing that gives you great pleasure. And it's the truth.

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Between a Rock and a Hard Place



by Michael Stepanian

kay, you've been busted and the guys that collared you are in clothes. They could be federal, state or local heat-or ripoffs, for all you know. But who they are and who they're working for is of paramount importance in your present situation.

The determination as to whether you're going to be prosecuted by federal, state or local authorities is ultimately decided by the various agencies involved in your apprehension. There are, though, a host of other considerations, among them being the type of informant (if any) that was used, the nature of the state's laws on search and seizure, whether the bust took place on federal land, whether there were any wiretaps or electronic eavesdropping devices involved, and on which level the government would find the case easiest to prosecute.

In most cases the trend is to let the states grab the case because of their having infinitely harsher statutes than the feds for the same crime. But for the defendant, owing to the condition of state prisons as compared to federal ones, federal prosecution is more desirable. On the other hand, there are some states, California for example, that take a more lenient approach than the feds to certain types of transgressions; so in the long run, it all depends on the individual situation.

The body of law is generally the same in state and federal courts. There is, though, the distinct impression that the state scene is small time, having a sort of good ol' boy quality, replete with judges jockeying for political appointments and headline-hungry D.A.s; essentially it's a hustling scene. The feds have a lot more class, but then again they're a lot sneakier; so it's going to be the sleaze or the sneaks; either way, not a very enviable position.

Though the body of law is generally the same twixt federal and state, there are a host of differences between the two systems, one of the most important involving the "standing" question.

In many states, if in the event the contraband and/or the evidence seized is damaging to you, you still have standing in which to suppress that information because it's being used against you. In federal court, if you are in a car as a passenger and you don't own the car, they're going to convict you because of the 40 pounds of marijuana found in the trunk. You may not have a right to suppress that stuff. Even if the car owner suppresses it, you still may not be able to get it suppressed in the case against you. Weird. But that's the feds.

In the federal system you go to an arraignment and then a preliminary examination is set (which you will invariably not get because the grand jury will meet and you'll be thrown right into district court). Your judge is picked by computer in order to secure against any fraud. You should be aware that the federal judge you go up against has been appointed for life, so consequently you're dealing with one of the most powerful persons in the government.

Federal moves a lot faster than state. There's a speedy-trial act in the federal system that requires all cases to be heard within 70 or so days, though the time limit can be waived under exceptional circumstances. In state you can kick around municipal court for a while and then be bumped up to superior court, and it all takes an incredible amount of time.

In federal court judges will allow more hearsay evidence to come in for the purpose of obtaining probable cause. In fact, they don't even allow evidentiary hearings in some districts. Some judges will prefer to have the narc testify at motions to suppress, whereas in state court you have more subpoena power, more time to build and nurture your case and more opportunities to attack the prosecution.

In many big cities the state court system is under attack because of the amount of plea bargaining that goes on, in all types of cases-rape, murder, you name it. In the federal system there is also plea bargaining, but not nearly as much. The judge doesn't get together with the two lawyers and kick things around and then decide what the sentence will be. U.S. attorneys don't like this setup and they don't do it.

We should also take note of the bail situation and how it differs in the two systems. In federal courts you can put up 10 percent of your bail and get that money back. In state courts you are going to have to go to bailbondsman, pay the 10 percent, put up a lot of collateral, which you won't see for a long, long time (the 10 percent you'll get back when the case is over).

Evidence codes differ between the two systems. In the state courts they are not playing around with conspiracy cases that much and don't make much use of the grand jury secrecy trip. Federal courts use conspiracy charges a great deal and their reading of the law is a lot looser, which of course allows them to get more convictions.

Overall the federal trial is a much more formal situation than the state. In a federal trial the jury will be picked from the general region, while the state jury will be culled from people in the local communities. A good defense lawyer should be able to wail in both scenes, even though he may find the state jury more easy to read.

Finally, there's the probation situation. If you do get convicted, you're going to have to deal with the probation officers. The state's people are overworked, hassled and are being driven crazy with hundreds of cases of all types. The feds are much cooler customers in this area as well. They've got less of a case load than the state people and are more powerful; they have more agencies feeding them information. They are efficient and know exactly what's going on.

Essentially, the whole system is insane. A huge snowball with rocks and roots crashing down on you. Yet after 15 years in the profession I still can't get over that, as berserk as the system is, it still seems to work.

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TASTER'S JOURNAL:

Delicacies from the drought and other observations

by "R."

Goodbye Thai Sticks

The surprise of the year in gourmet grass has been the disappearance of the Dread Drought. It's been astonishing, in fact, how many different and delicious things to taste there have been during the late summer period when we fanciers of extraprimo used to have to settle for moldy commercial product dug up from the back bins of some wholesaler's warehouse. The star of this short season, however, has been what has become a welcome staple: pressed stickless Thai. Stuff like this has been around off and on for two years with wildly varying quality. (Some seedless Thai got one of my Worst of the Year citations in the 2nd Annual Connoisseur Award ceremonies two years ago, yet "Bullet Thai" won Best High-Foreign-Hawaiian honors last year.) I could talk about the sweet Eastern high, the distinctive camphor-and-cardamom spiciness of true Thai, but let me dwell for a moment on the one thing missing from this otherwise terrific Thai: the sticks. When was the last time you actually came upon a genuine Thai stick? I'll tell you my last time. Last drought, the drought before the one that didn't happen this year. Somebody showed me a block of puny, crudely cornered, clumsily tied alleged marijuana that was being sold as Thai sticks. Well, it was obvious from the first taste of the stuff in a joint that the closest these sticks had ever been to Thailand was a warehouse in western Colombia

where someone had hired some native labor to tie some strands of Colombian twine around some wooden matchstick-size sticks. In fact, maybe they had just clipped the heads off some wooden matchsticks. It was terrible. The worst Thai sticks in history. Not just the taste and the high, which were bad enough, but the pathetic parody of the past glory of Thai sticks, the prodigious waste of peasant labor in producing such a botched bogus version. It was heartbreaking.

The point is, very little real Thai comes on sticks anymore. I suppose that's probably obvious in venues where you get to see a dozen different Thai varieties a season; but for cities in which Thai is maybe a once-a-year treat, it should be helpful to know that most of the best stuff these days has been stickless. And come to think of it, it makes sense: After the novelty of the exotic braided packaging gimmick wore off, people began realizing they were spending many dollars on useless pieces of dead wood and yards of unsmokable twine.

This season I saw some other developments in Thai packaging: pressed, stickless buds, and "pillows" (bags of loose, unpressed, stickless Thai). All of it managed to deliver that special, exotic, intoxicating Thai high, that sensuous, majestic feeling that seduces the stream of consciousness into strange and marvelous passageways. Adding sticks would have been silly, would have made it, I'm sure, much more bulky and costly to import. I'm not saying all Thai on sticks is worthless; I'm just welcoming the Thai importers into the mass-market world of modern marijuana.

Hello Panama Panamanians

The second surprise of the drought season was the appearance, with credible pedigrees, of genuine grown-in-Panama Panamanian grass. You'll recall the excitement at this year's Connoisseur Awards ceremony when a West Virginia-grown Panamanian-seed-

stock sinsemilla swept four Herbies. Still, the rarity of real Panama Panamanian -that ol' devil Panama red-is such that the skeptical Connoisseur had to be tricked into trying some. It happened this way: Someone showed me a quarter ounce of reddish brown buds and told me they were the best Colombian around-a real step up and worth trying. Now I've heard that line for several years and every time I've been disappointed. But this guy was persistent. He rolled one up, lit it and practically forced the smoking reefer into my lungs in his eagerness. Well, I try to be a good sport in situations like this, so I gave it a try. At first I didn't notice much difference; the flavor was a little fresher and spicier than most warehoused Colombian. "So what," I was thinking . . . when suddenly I found myself standing up, pacing around, talking with animation, making wild connections, making weird jokes, laughing at other people: a happy sociable high. Then the guy told me: "It's not Colombian, you know, it's Panamanian, the real thing." Then, just a week later, I ran into someone who claimed to have a small quantity of Panamanian sinsemilla on hand. No, he'd never met or heard of the other guy; it just seemed to be Panama's month to shine. This Panamanian-grown sinsemilla wasn't as fresh as the West Virginian Panamanian, but it was incredibly intense. You could feel the pressure of two mighty oceans pressed against the little isthmus of ground upon which the grass was grown.

Mildly trippy, too; you wandered outside and began to feel that fine electric resonance to the bright objects of contemplation in the visual field.

Then someone else handed me a joint two days later of something she said was Panama Panamanian. A delightful, uplifting, spiritual high, the kind of entranced sublime sensation you get from a Bach cantata. The whole universe of Being seemed to tremble in harmony to its harpsichordlike resonance. I was Canal Zoned.

continued on page 91



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SCANDALS, BUSTS, AND DEEDS OF DERRING-DO

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> Jan '82 No. 77

BOLIVIAN UPDATE:

COCAINE GENERALS RESHUFFLE JUNTA; BUSINESS AS USUAL



LAPAZ, BOLIVIA



Pres. Gen. Luis Garcia Meza

Garcia Meza stepped down as Bolivia's eljefe last August, as promised—but only after a tense week-long occupation of Santa Cruz Department by nominally "reformist" military chiefs who considered Garcia Meza's toonotorious implications in the international cocaine traffic a disgrace to the nation and an impediment to the much-longed-for recognition of the La Paz military government by the Reagan administration.

General Garcia Meza had sworn to step out of office peaceably on Bolivia's Independence Day, August 6, but as the date drew nearer he began making increasingly more reluctant and authoritarian noises about

preserving his office. So on August 3 a coalition of military brass, led by right-wing Gen. Alberto Natusch Busch, rolled heavy ordnance into the city of Santa Cruz and threatened to ignite a full-fledged civil war unless Garcia Meza were gotten rid of. After five days of mounting tension, Garcia Meza finally stepped down, turning over the government to his air-force commander, Gen. Waldo Bernal, navy chief Admiral Oscar Pammo and Interior Minister Gen. Celso Torrelio. The junta briefly operated as a troika, until General Bernal was identified by the New York Times as the Garcia Meza regime's long-standing connection with the five main coke-running families (mafias) of Bolivia.

A ROUNDUP OF CONSPICUOUS COP BUSTS OF 1981

SHOOFLY, DON'T BOTHER ME

Turnabout Is Fair Play

ROBERT HEUCK IS THE POlice chief in San Antonio, Texas.

"There were rumors the chief was on his way out," recalls one of seven San Antonio cops snapped up on petty dope charges last spring. "They wanted to replace him with a Mexican, a Hispanic. So he wanted to make it look as if he was cleaning up his household."

So on a certain morning in April, seven low-echelon beat cops, mostly Hispanic, were all collared for petty dealing charges, with considerable drama and ceremony. Whole teams of narcs seized them, one by one, at their homes or duty stations: two narcs holding the subject's arms, another to grab his revolver and rip off his badge, and a fourth to read his Miranda rights while the cop was compelled to strip out of his blues on the spot. All seven were suspended and prosecuted, their careers wrecked.

The shoofly cop who fingered the seven, Charles "Bubba" Jakeman, was curiously selective in busting six Hispanic officers and one Anglo who, it transpired in court testimony, had personally loathed Jakeman for some time past. The arrested cops all agreed that Jakeman could have pretty much taken his pick from among an estimated 200 San Antonio cops who, to their estimation, mess with small quantities of herb, downs and Texas meth.

Chief Heuck's "housecleaning," and all the publicity, may have saved his job, but it may also have spawned a sordid reprisal. Three months later eight DEA and San Antonio undercover narcs clapped the cuffs on city robbery detective O.J. "Jim" Meissner in broad daylight in a downtown parking lot, as Meissner was allegedly negotiating the exchange of \$500,000 for 55 pounds of cocaine. Meissner, a 26-year veteran cop who had broken in Chief Heuck himself as a rookie, did not consult his service revolver at the time of the bust, though his civilian codefendant put up a fuss and had to be taken subsequently to a hospital. Chief Heuck expressed deep regret at the bust of his old buddy. The federal investigation that nailed Meissner had been launched, coincidentally, about the very same time the seven beat cops were busted, and perhaps began naming names to the feds.

Who's Minding the Bin?

Nobody's Talking in Lou-isville, Kentucky, where the very head of the narc squad, Capt. Morton Childress, was abruptly bounced from his position last summer. It supposedly had something to do with a Louisville cop named Rudy Davis who, the shoofly board there has charged, tried to interest another cop in filching 150 pounds of reefer out of the evidence bin. At the moment this news came out one narc resigned and another was suspended without pay for a month. But all may not be filthy in Louisville: The remaining 16 narcs in the squad did agree to submit to poly-graphs and piss tests.

Custom-ary Procedure

I T TAKES PATIENCE AND IN-dustry, and a strong stomach, but if you really apply yourself, you can make a mint by cozying up to the Customs snoops at Kennedy Airport in New York. That's what New York City crimebusters say they discovered, after four years of running a modest little sting operation called In-ner City Trucking through the great international entrepôt. They set up this trucking outfit in 1977, expecting to snap up any Teamster toughs and Mafia hoods who muscled in on them. But things just got curiouser and curiouser as time went on. It turned out that the almighty U.S. Customs Service itself is full of individuals who, if they have reason to like a person, will tip that person to the storage sites of valuable airborne cargoes and the best ways to hiiack them. Some are even congenial enough to let you move dope and guns through Kennedy if you approach them properly—like with a suitcase full of money. The NYPD lads of Inner City Trucking say they have numerous such incidents on videotape, in fact. But for some reason the indictments have been exceedingly slow in coming down; so until they do, Kennedy is a very promising location for enterprising operators.

Special Delivery

T APPEARS THAT DOUGlas Aalbers, former guard at the Seattle Public Safety Center (read: "jail"), does not do cocaine. Last summer a con on Aalbers's block told city prosecutors that the 22-year-

old hack was amenable to carrying coke and other goodies into the joint, for a fee, so they dropped the net on him. Spe-cifically, an undercover cop gave Aalbers a few tinfoils of pure mannitol and \$50 per pack to deliver each one to certain inmates. Had Aalbers only sneaked a taste of the baby laxative, he might've averted what came next—the morning he showed up for work at the slam, and was locked up inside it until his attorney delivered the bail ticket. While he was locked away, two local men who allegedly provided Aal-bers with grass, hash and coke were rounded up. On conviction, King County prosecutor Steve Moore recommended the lad do a year anywhere except the Seattle jail.

The Hollywood Cocaine Scandal, Chapter 2

A one, a toot and a treat!



VIRGINIA YIELDS BUMPER '81 BOUNTY

LYNCHBURG, VIRGIN A

MARIJUANA MOONSHINELS they recalled now—not because they brew inferior homemade reefer but because many of them are from the same hillbilly families who previously ran jugs of white lightning past county sheriffs and federal revenuers out of the backcountry Virginia hills.

But the demand for white lightning has plunged drastically the last few years, according to the Bureau of Al-cohol, Firearms and Tobacco (BATF) in Washington. At the same time, the demand nationwide for marijuana has peaked, subsided slightly and stayed at a constant, reliable level since 1978, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). And the hereditary Virginia blockade runners are no fools; they have a sharp and canny eye for economic statistics like this. As a result, Virginia narcs this fall were carting long tons of standing weed out the woods, more than ever before.

Pretty special weed it was, too, a lot of it; exotic cross-



Hillbilly heat baggin' bush.

breeds of African and Asian ancestry, painstakingly pruned, and manicured into aristocratic-quality sinsemilla. Obviously, the Virginia growers keep a speculator's eye on the Trans-High Market Quotations. The glut of commercial Colombian over the last couple seasons has

clearly oversupplied the national market; now that everyone in the country who wants marijuana can get it with minimal hassle, the commercial price for Colombian has plummeted everywhere.

By laying in exotic seeds, then, and lavishing special care on a few isolated, tiny plots of sinse, a person now can turn over considerably more profit out of reefer than rotgut. The ease with which confined sinse plots can be camouflaged from ground and aerial reconnaissance is an added plus. Though the Richmond state narcs went heavy into helicopter surveillance this fall, most of the pot sightings they made came, as always, from amateur-snitch tips: people who got paid by the cops for reporting grass plots they'd spied out in the boonies.

Scott County, especially the lonesome hill district between the Clinch and Huston rivers, is a particularly promising location for such sub rosa agriculture. There cops pulled 15,000 plants out of a single mixed-sex plot that was evidently being tended by parties unknown on behalf of two out-of-state investors. These overambitious individuals, it seems, erred not merely by bringing up more marijuana than could be camouflaged from overhead view, but also by renting the un-promising 30 acres of backwoods scrub at a sum that would have been more than sufficient to purchase it outright. This sort of thing arouses the interest of Virginia local authorities, who are no dumber than the local moonshiners.

Sinse-plot raids tended to turn up no more than 500 plants to a patch, though one King George County haul turned up 2,000 plants: Again, overambitious cultivation. State narcs and local cops also pulled raids in Floyd, Nelson, Warren, Craig and Gloucester counties, averaging about one raid per week from the July budding period to the September prefrost harvest.

Comparatively few busts accompanied the Virginia harvest roundups: Moonshiners are past masters at avoiding getting caught with the goods on them. And when it comes to trucking the stuff to market, the new Virginia weedrunners report that the Drug Enforcement Administration lads are considerably more nearsighted and muddleheaded than the BATF blockade keepers ever were.

GOBLINS AND ELVES INVADE WISCONSIN WOODS

CHEQUAMEGON NATIONAL FOREST, WISCONSIN

HE GOBLIN IN THE PICTURE L is one of 500 people protesting at the U.S. Navy's ELF Test Facility in northern Wisconsin. The facility, consisting of 28 miles of ELF (extremely low frequency) antenna cable powered by two powerful transformers, was built in 1969 with an April Fool's Day promise that it would be removed when testing was completed. The Reagan administration has broken this promise with its announced intention to begin upgrading the facility so thatit is transmitting on a 24-houra-day basis late this fall, to an ever-increasing number of submarines.

However, this is just the first step. A full-size underground antenna will eventually transform thousands of square miles of private



lands and public forests into the world's largest radio transmitter, its military roles being the trigger finger for the Trident nuclear submarine.

Resident goblins claim the electromagnetic radiation transmitted by ELF is potentially hazardous. The Navy's

own tests have found ELF to cause altered growth in cells and plants, weight gain in male monkeys, disruption of bird flight and behavioral changes in humans. People living miles from the ELF Test Facility have literally been shocked in their bathtub by ELF's electricity.

The Navy has said that Project ELF would be very vulnerable. Therefore, anyone living in or visiting a vast area would become a potential saboteur. The transmissions from ELF can be used to read the geology of the earth. For this and other reasons, ELF would open the door to nuclear waste disposal and radioactive uranium mining. A Congressional report has concluded that ELF is not militarily necessary, and because it is designed for a so-called limited nuclear war it would make the north woods a prime nuclear target.

FIREWATER RAID BACKFIRES ON COPS

PUYALLUP, WASHINGTON

DWARD COMENOUT WAS busted last summer in a midnight raid on his family's Indian Country Store here and charged with illegal pos-session of and intent to sell. booze and smokes.

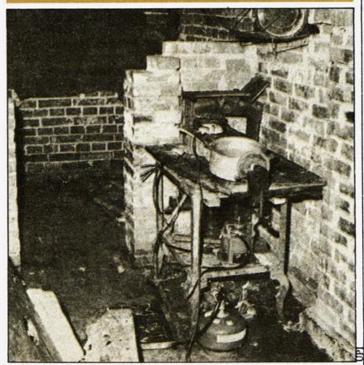
Gun-wielding state Revenue and Liquor Board agents,

with local cops, bashed into the Indian Country Store, forced Comenout's 80-yearold mother out of her adjoining trailer and seized 20 cases of liquor and 1.798 cartons of cigarettes. The agents appear to have been under the impression that since the Comenout store is located several miles from the Puyallup Indian Reservation, Comenout might not be paying liquor and tobacco taxes to anyone. Ever since a federal court finally approved the sale of liquor on reservations some years back, Indian liquor stores have sold booze and cigarettes rather cheaply, paying low taxes to the reservation heads. Cops are always busting Anglos trying to "smuggle" home bottles of reservation-bought Scotch and brandy. "Usually we try to catch the customers just as they come off the reservation," a liquor board offi-cial cracked. "Only here, there was no reservation for them to come off of.'

In this the liquor board has gravely erred, counters the Comenout family's attorney, Frederick Frohmader. A 1926

deed, produced by Froh-mader, establishes the Comenout property as a section of the Quinault Indian Reservation-to which, in fact. Comenout duly pays liquor and tobacco taxes. The Comenouts ran a berry farm there until 1937, when the state laid a road past it, ruining it for that purpose. So they opened the present grocery store, expanding into bottled-liquor sales when it became legal to do so. The Comenout Indian

Country Store supports Edward and five brothers, numerous children and grandchildren, and his elderly mother. The cops who stuck guns in her face in the middle of the night, Frohmader suggests, may have to answer for that in court.



A cellar in a house in suburban Warsaw, discovered during police raids on heroin-producing "home factories" recently. Addiction is booming in Poland as youths have begun processing the native red poppy into a brew containing morphine (called makicara), and later into 70 percent heroin. A one-centimeter bag can be bought on the street for about 50 cents and heavy junkies use up to 20 bags a day. While 40 addicts have died of overdoses in Warsaw this year, it is estimated that there may be 300 living addicts for each death.

NEW LEGAL MAG TO COMBAT NARC ABUSE

HOUSTON, TEXAS

OTSMOKERS AND DEALERS, twoofthis country's most significant minority groups, need lawyers to remain at large—cunning lawyers, smart lawyers, honest law-yers, well-informed lawyers. To assist this elite corps of advocates the National College for Criminal Defense the University Houston's Bates College of Law is putting out a new publication, the Drug Law Reporter. There are dozens of other specialized legal publications that compile court decisions on topics ranging from environmental law to federal tax law, but this one differs. Patrick Bishop, the editor, doesn't mask his disdain for the current repressive system of enforcing drug laws. In an editorial in the first edition Bishop calls drug usage "a minor annoyance that society has turned into an \$80-billion-a-year business. "And as the business grows bigger and better organized, the forces of control become more and more willing to use police-state methods to stamp it out," Bishop writes. He says the Texas antidrug wiretap law passed by the last session of the legislature was justified "by the Stalin-ist rationale that those who have nothing to hide won't mind if police agents listen to their private conversations and activities." Obviously, the Drug Law Reporter will have a select readership, mainly attorneys who defend drug suspects. The subscription cost for the publication is \$275 per year-\$22.96 per issue.

OVERCROWDED CONS CAN SUE FOR BREATHING SPACE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

VERCROWDED PRISON COnditions constitute cruel and unusual punishment, especially in the case of longterm prisoners, a Justice Department survey has concluded. Researchers working for the National Institute of Justice have determined that chronic overcrowding produces classic "behavioral sink" syndromes in cons subjected to it over a long term.

They tend to get sick, to die sooner, to commit suicide more frequently, and to develop behavioral disorders at a rate much higher than shortterm prisoners or free people.

Among state prisons alone, 24 have been cited as being in violation of constitutional protection against cruel and unusual punishment; equalprotection challenges have also been mounted by cons against their conditions, with more than 8,000 such lawsuits pending nationwide. While the Supreme Court

last year ruled that it's not necessarily unconstitutional, under certain conditions, to put two prisoners in a cell designed for one, that hardly closes the overcrowding issue. In fact, under continuing pressure from cons and their lawyers, the Justice Department recently recommended that \$2 billion in funds be expended for further prison construction.

"GET HIGH ON YOURSELF"

HOLLYWOOD SINGS THE DRUG MENACE AWAY

By Bob LaBrasca

OME PEOPLE HAVE THE MIDAS TOUCH.
They can turn calamity into bonanza, personal disaster into spectacular triumph. As the Scientology cultists say, them folks must be "clear."

Take Hollywood producer Robert Evans, for instance: The administrative honcho behind the Godfather films, Chinatown, Marathon Man and a string of other cinematic hits was busted last year scoring five ounces of top-shelf blow. That's a hefty buy—enough, probably, to put you or me away for a couple of years. But not Robert Evans. Money is money, and also power, particularly in the criminal-justice system. Evans bought himself some prime legal muscle that knew how to play the judge like a piano, and when the case came to court in October of 1980 he walked out with only a year's probation in exchange for the promise of using his media talents to help get kids off drugs.

media talents to help get kids off drugs.

Almost a year later NBC aired Evans's ransom, the "Get High on Yourself" special—a one-hour "celebration of life" and, incidentally, competition, patriotism and the American way. It featured a lineup of stars including Burt Reynolds, John Travolta, Olivia Newton-John, Paul Newman, Bob Hope, Muhammad Ali and, of course, Evans's girl friend: everyone's favorite prom queen and Hollywood's most ubiquitous antidruggie, Cathy Lee Crosby, a member of the Church of Scientology cult and a volunteer in its Narcanon anti-drug abuse program. The show had the style of an upbeat commercial, so much so that it was difficult to differentiate between the program itself and the McDonald's spots that punctuated it. For a buoyant 60 minutes, celebrities and selected kids mostly

sang varied arrangements of the "Get High on Yourself" ditty, composed especially for the show by jingle king Steve Karmen.

Intercut with the songfest sequences were shots of athletic feats by Bruce Jenner, the U.S. Olympic hockey team, et al., along with a few brief and fairly pointless rap sessions between an assembled peanut gallery and Burt Reynolds or Travolta and Newton-John. Despite claims that this extravaganza would eschew horror stories in favor of the "positive approach," just about the only mention of drugs in the whole show came when the celebs told their young audience about people they'd known who had OD'd or whose careers had collapsed because of dope. All of the stars participating in the show, it was emphasized in prebroadcast publicity, were

In short, it was a pathetic blend of ignorant good intentions and bloated, self-righteous egotism—and will probably never do anything to help anyone avoid the pitfalls of drug abuse. In fact, it's probably fair to say this kind of orgy of platitudes about "making it" does more harm than good.

One central purpose of "Get High on Yourself," according to the ever-talkative Cathy Lee, was to offer American youth some real "drug-free heroes." Well, first of all, not everyone who lent his or her name to this project is all that drug free. This magazine is not about to mention names and expose anyone to investigation and arrest, but, well, we know better.

Cathy Lee also neglected to mention that 11 top "drug-free" Scientologists, including Mary Sue Hubbard, wife of founder L. Ron Hubbard, were just recently convicted of conspiracy and other charges related to break-ins at federal offices. Besides these convictions, a host of other allegations—including brainwashing and harassment—have been leveled against the authoritarian cult and many of its members. Obviously, Cathy thinks it's better to be a programmed ninny than to smoke a weed that gives you a fresh look at the world.

But, more to the point, this whole business of constructing appropriate heroes from among their own ranks is just one more expression of superstar vanity. The curse might be that we have too many damn heroes; the media create a couple every day. It's easy, I suppose, for the vain brains of Hollywood to believe that when a few of their number get busted, or overdose and die, it seduces half a generation into obsessive indulgence in chemicals; but isn't it likely that a bigger problem for kids, all but a negligible few, is that they grow up full of dreams of glory and then one day have to realize that they'll never throw the javelin like Bruce Jenner or act like Paul Newman or sing like Al Jarreau or look like Cathy Lee Crosby-no matter how they try? Then what? Dashed dreams and dead hopes are probably two of America's greatest inducements to drug dependence.

Of course, no one ever hinted, in this hour-long testimonial by rich and famous people to the good things in life, that the miseries of alcoholism, heroin addiction and so on are deeply interwoven with other sticky social problems like poverty and racism. Not in this era of Reaganomics. Hell, no! Look at the bright side. Give the riffraff something to strive for Give them

But the most offensive aspect of this outpouring of Me Generation puke was that it managed to put the capital D back on drugs. Maybe a little history is in order here:

Back about 10 or 12 years ago, when the "psychedelic revolution" was having its trickle down effect, drug educators were forced to acknowledge that the society was steeped in drugs: alcohol, tranquilizers, coffee, aspirin, cold tablets, and so on—quick fixes for every conceivable human condition. Maybe pot wasn't so bad; it was obviously taking a lower toll in life and health than alcohol. If you wanted increasingly sophisticated kids to listen to you for more than five seconds, you had to give up the transparently hypocritical moralisms about Drugs and point out the distinction between drug use and drug abuse. Moderation and knowledge of what you were putting into your body were the keys to a balanced life.

But in the days of the ascendancy of the Moral Majority, you just don't put that stuff on prime-time TV.

JORGY



COCAINE GENERALS continued from page 19

Very shortly after this disclosure General Torrelio was officially designated as sole president, since evidently no dope-running stigma could then be attached to him. General Bernal, however, remained head of the Bolivian air force; and at least 15 planes per week still leave Bolivia, stuffed with coca paste, for the Brazilian cocaine kitchens, en route to North America (see "Cocaine Colonialism," HIGH TIMES, August '81.)

During the brief troika period, the junta's propaganda wizards did a fabulous job of smearing General Natusch Busch (whose politics are nearly as reactionary as Attila the Hun's) as a puppet of Moscow and the extreme Latin American left. This propaganda, in the estimation of seasoned observers, had every earmark of polished Argentine ultrafascist rhetoric: suggesting that Argentina has supported Bolivia's cocaine colonels with hired pens



The junta replacing Pres. Gen. Luis Garcia Meza is sworn in. Left to right: Gen. Celso Torrelio Vila, Gen. Waldo Bernal and Rear Adm. Oscar Pammo.

as well as hired guns. General Bernal's hired pens even at-tributed the Santa Cruz rebellion to the work of imported Sandinistas from Nicaragua and M-19 Marxists from Colombia.

The comedy of it all is punctuated by the later-disclosed fact that cocaine kingpin Roberto Suarez had personally provisioned General Natusch Busch's rebels with 20,000 kilos of beef from his extensive Beni Department stockvards. According to the Times's subsequent listing of Bolivian pichicata princes, Suarez is currently numero uno among the nation's narcotics godfathers; if he was supporting General Natusch's "rebellion," the whole national crisis appears to have been a mere falling-out among dope mobsters. Exiled Bolivian general Humberto Cajoya commented bitterly Aires that Buenos Natusch uprising was really not "a political conflict, or a conflict of ideology thought; what is happening in my country is a different phenomenon. There is a mafia that manages the narcotics traffic and controls threads of power."

Bogus "Dope Crackdown"

HIS RESHUFFLE IN LA PAZ was Bolivia's 191st coup in 138 years of independence. At least it was bloodless this time. Natusch Busch himself won a bloody coup in 1979some 400 people were massacred in La Paz on that occasion-but ruled only 16 days before Garcia Meza exiled him to Peru. He was abetted in last August's "uprising" by Gen. Lucio Añez, who had mounted a coup against Garcia Meza previously but was betrayed, he charged, by military underlings bought off with Garcia Meza's cocadollars. Añez, and Natusch, while they held Santa Cruz Department, threatened to cut the rest of the nation off from its

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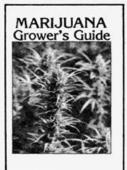
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Gen. Celso Torrelio takes the oath of office, becoming Bolivia's 37th president in the past 50 years.

vital petroleum and naturalgas pipelines; even the offi-cially banned tin miners' union was allowed to call for a mine strike. Finally the church stepped in; the papal nuncio arranged a tête-à-tête between Natusch and the La Paz troika at an army base, and hostilities were averted, and things returned to corruption-as-usual.

the helm. Bolivia has mounted a two-ply campaign to ameliorate the country's catastrophic condition. After years of being run by dope movers Bolivia is bankrupt, on paper; the Times says La Paz has bounced checks approaching \$15 million on American banks, which is probably a conservative estimate, since the country's \$96 million in legitimate cash re-

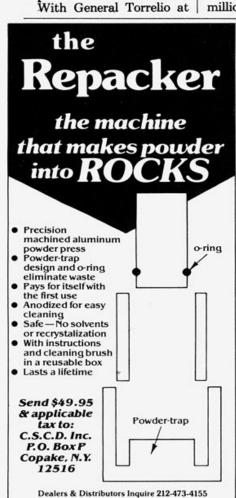
serves is dwarfed by its \$3.7 billion in foreign debts. While people like General Bernal according to the Times-can easily pull down \$100,000 American per week from the coke trade, such filthy money is hardly suitable for paying off legitimate foreign debts; it mainly stays inside Bolivia, debasing the value of the peso and aggravating the already crushing burden of inflation for most Bolivian civilians, who have no access whatsoever to the treasured U.S.minted cocadollars.

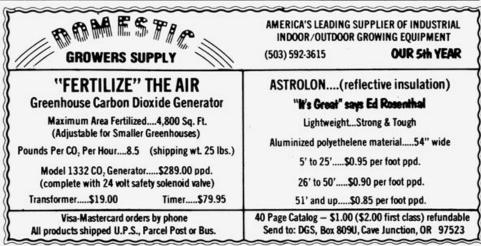
The Torrelio regime's response, predictably, has been to launch a cosmetic dope crackdown and beg foreign sources for mucho money with which, supposedly, to combat the narcotraficantes. Independent coke movers are actually lured to Bolivia, according to industry reports, and then busted there to augment the regime's bust statistics. (Top coke mafiosos like Bernal and Suarez, needless to say, go unmolested.) On the foreign end, Bolivia's U.N. ambassador, Fernando Ortiz Sanz, has melodramatically beseeched the General Assembly for support and funds for proposed narcotics interdiction and coca-crop substitution programs.

HIGH TIMES has come across a memo from Ambassador Ortiz to Kurt Waldheim: "This criminal traffic introduces huge amounts of hard currency into Bolivia, which serves to spread corruption, conspire against the political order, and convert the nation into an unextinguishable source of revenue for the international underworld."The analysis is entirely accurate, but Ortiz's accompanying claim that previous Bolivian regimes fought against it is spurious: Bolivian presidents and brass throughout the '70s worked cannily and methodically to build up the coke trade, and with people like Bernal still holding major power there it's hardly realistic to imagine that General Torrelio has the desire or ability to materially change things.

Lucho Arce Returns?

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ilies in Bolivia work sometimes with military credentials but most often as a power unto themselves. Currently they're moving their coca plantations and pasta kitchens from Santa Cruz to the Amazonian district of Beni, on the Brazilian border, wherefrom the entire Bolivian armed forces would have trouble extirpating them. According to the La Paz Catholic daily, Presencia, the coke mobs fairly frequently shoot it out with army troops whenever a noncorrupt officer tries to intercept a shipment of pasta at a jungle strip; and the army does not always necessarily emerge victorious.

The army, of course, has to contend with massive topbrass corruption. Col. Luis "Lucho" Arce was recently reinstated to the service after exposure on CBS-TV of his coke trafficking had prompted his temporary expulsion. Colonel Arce, who engineered the mass-torture-and-kidnap binge that accompanied Garcia Meza's 1980 coup, spent his civilian period in Taiwan, teaching the locals God

knows what refinements of police-state administration. Now he's back in uniform in La Paz, where, says Presencia, many of his coke-mob paramilitary underlings were

previously and conveniently "absorbed into the Special Security Service"

NY TIMES TEAM TERRORIZED BY

COCHABAMBA, BOLIVIA

HERE IS A BUSY TAVERN IN Santa Cruz City with a curious English name: Bavaria Shop. The regulars in this joint are mainly dignified-looking European gentlemen of late middle age, many of whom would right now be in European prisons if they hadn't managed to escape the Nuremburg War Crimes tribunal after World War II: ex-SS Nazis, Gestapo chiefs and prominent French Italian collaborators with Adolf Hitler's "final so-lution." The imported Pilsener flows abundantly, and nostalgic old ballads like "Die Horstwessel Lied" intoned over it.

New York Times correspondents Marisabel Villasante de Schumacher and Peter McFarren, according to the La Paz daily Presencia, set out one day last fall for the home of one of these noted Europeans-Klaus Altmann, aka Klaus Barbie, retired Gestapo chief of occupied Lyons, who lives at 100 Thirteenth October Street here in Cochabamba. From the looks of it, Schumacher and McFarren had read about Herr Altman/Barbie in last May's HIGH TIMES ["Cocaine Colonialism"]; already, Times correspondent Edward Schumacher had filed a sort of checklist exposé of all the government coke movers named months earlier in HIGH TIMES, and dug up a mann/Barbie's name never made the Times's list.

According to Presencia, when Ms. Schumacher and

Mr. McFarren lodged themselves on Altmann/Barbie's doorstep and refused to leave without an interview, the Nazi called the heat: the local post of the dreaded Special Security Service, in fact, who grabbed the two reporters and jugged them right away. Presencia was told they'd been "questioned separately and with physical threats" at the Security Service's local shock shop. They were released unharmed at nightfall, and the Cochabamba cops promised to "investigate" the incident clear to the

The reporters may have encountered some other Bavarians during the experience, though. According to the Belgian daily La Derniere Heure, the Special Security Service here enjoys the fine

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army, given official uniforms, guns and military ID cards. In exchange for Arce's servic-

es to the narcomilitary fas-cists, the Torrelio government gave him a key job as

NAZI TORTURE SQUAD

talents of Schutzstaffel commandant Albert von Ingelom, who came to Bolivia, after doing 20 years on a Nuremberg conviction, to peddle his expertise. But the Schumacher/McFarren incident never made the Times itself.

Which is mystifying, because the *Times* did finger junta *jefe* Waldo Bernal as a \$100,000-a-week pichicata profiteer. When the Times can identify half the government of Bolivia as narcotraficantes but nearly gets wired with AC for merely knocking on the door of Altmann/ Barbie (whom neighbors describe simply as "a nice old man"), it stirs up morbid questions about the real power of the Fascist International of the Southern Cone.

Altmann/Barbie, of course, trained the polished paramilitary troops with which the cocaine colonels took over Bolivia in 1980. The Argentine government also had a visible hand in the violent pichicata putsch, lending their own "mechanic school" military advisers to help out the Bolivian "security" forces. And yet another Third Reich bully was spotted recently when SS commander Hans Stellfeld and eight of his mercs were stopped at the border between Bolivia and Brazil by cops of the latter police state.

When the New York Times can openly identify all the top government narcotics movers in Bolivia, but not the veteran Nazis who enforce the traffic, priorities have clearly reached a curious state in South America, and at the Times itself.

military attaché in Argentina, from where he can regain his contacts with the repressive establishment down there in case a new coup may be needed to replace Torrelio.

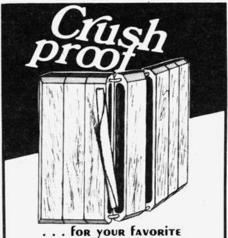
But Torrelio's public-relations "drug crackdown" continues, gaining much publicity. Great headlines were recently generated over the case of an American, John Rooney, who'd been sen-tenced to a year and a half in jail for coke running in Garcia Meza's days; under Torrelio's "crackdown," Rooney's sen-tence was righteously extended to ten years. Curiously enough, Garcia Meza himself stayed in the opulent presidential Palacio Quemado enjoying his customary presidential limousine and helicopter service for several weeks after his "ouster." Our last reports of his itinerary indicated that Garcia Meza, like his buddy Lucho Arce, had gone to Taiwan to cool out for a while.

Whether General Torrelio can bamboozle the Reagan administration into tendering much needed American recognition and aid to his

government is problematical. While the current Bolivian regime is certainly as remorsely "authoritarian" as the Reagan people could possibly hope for, it's also populated mainly, at the highest level, by internationally acknowledged cocaine gangsters. Though General Torrelio himself may not have acknowledged (as yet) connections in the pichicata racket, he has worked closely for years with toot barons like Bernal and Garcia Meza. If he didn't know where they were getting all those green American cocadollars from, Torrelio would have had to be stone blind, or exceptionally re-tarded, even for an army general.

According to CONADE, the global organization of Bolivian exiles, Torrelio's in-statement is "only a cosmetic arrangement to present a more acceptable facade to the world." He is described as "a front man for the corrupt forces ruling Bolivia." Insists CONADE: "Only a democratically elected govern-ment will be acceptable to the

Bolivian people.



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WHO SMOKES MORE, MEN OR WOMEN?

by Bud Bogart

The pot industry, like any bullish business, pays a good deal of attention to the demographics of sex. Just who smokes what where and for how much is a question every serious dealer wisely knows the answer to. And one of the most intriguing areas of consideration in this field of market research is just who smokes more pot, men or women?

At first the answer seems obvious. Just look at the sex breakdown of prisoners of weed, the unlucky dealers and consumers

RANS-HIGH

who end up behind bars. For every one woman marking time there are a hundred men, even discounting the long history of sexual bias against males that establishment justice is heir to. And of course the smuggling and dealing business is domi-

But among consumers it's a different story. In areas where the exchange of pot is relatively unimpeded by law, and where potheads have no social stigma attached to them-places like New York and San Francisco-some startling stats are turning up: pot smoking, like intercourse, seems to have an equal number of enthu-

siasts among both sexes.

A half dozen ounce and pound dealers contacted for this informal survey all said that at least half of their customers were women. One said that most of his customers were women, though they probably bought quantitatively less than his male buyers. He felt that more of the men bought pot and sold part of it to others, whereas women tended to buy mainly for themselves. Another dealer pointed out that ten years ago the women who bought from him were mostly buying it for their boyfriends, or culture groupies trying to look hip who really didn't appreciate pot. Now he says his women buyers are looking, like men, for a good high, know the market and the prevailing prices. Liberation marches on.

The significance of this shows up in the profit sheets of neighborhood ounce dealers. While wholesalers are having a hard time unloading last year's glut of Colombian and this year's bumper sinse crop, the consumer-oriented dealers-those who sell smoke not to other dealers but to consumers who smoke it-are having their best year and fastest turnover ever. Some of these dealers are saying the reason for this flurry of street-level activity is the increased number of women smoking herb, and they're looking for ways to increase this clientele. Can the designer joint be far off?

Too close to home: Every town and city has a rep for one item: cars in Detroit, citrus in Phoenix, arrogant, rich, white radicals in Madison, Wisconsin—and of course, Miami, Wall Street of the pot trade. Why, then, Miamians and others who have gone there hoping to purchase weed are wondering, is pot so expensive in

this dope-trading mecca? If you want to buy some decent pot in this burg, you've got to buy a bale at least or it goes right on by to Atlanta and New York," one local complained in a letter to HIGH TIMES recently, and that's pretty much the story in a nutshell. While you can check out 40 varieties of pot on a good day in Miami, they're mostly for sale only in quantity. Half bales, about 30 to 50 pounds, are the smallest unit a lot of these dealers will handle—understandably, when you consider some of them are trying to unload half a million pounds and are not interested in selling it off a pound

Texas league...used to mean the small time, but that's about the only time anything about Texas meant small. Now some Texans have moved to Mexico to leave their mark on the sinsemilla trade there. Amazingly, Mexican pot farmers have still not caught on to sinsemilla growing. They'd rather siesta and shoot holes in stop signs. A coterie of Texans has seized the situation by the longhorns, as it were, and set up its own plantation somewhere on the western dope-growing slopes in a Mexican state. Their product, which comes labeled as "Oaxacan sinsemilla," is a remarkably good pot for the bucks, provided the price is not over a thou an elbow. One problem is it tends to turn dusty instead of shaky when it gets old, a technical flaw that could be prevented through other means of curing. Could be a major late-summer contender from now on.

Grow American: Remember those pictures in My Weekly Reader when you were a kid that showed Alaskan farmers holding up turnips the size of dogsleds, along with stories that the "midnight sun" would someday enable Alaskan growers to produce bench-sized corn and other gigantic species of vegetables? Well, that prediction, like so many others from that peculiar decade, has since been re-duced to ridicule, but lo and behold, Alaskan pot growers have lately come up with a long-term plant that feasts on natural sunlight-in a greenhouse of course-in the long winter eves of Alaska. It's not that hot, say those who have tried it, but it's a pleasant enough high and a great plant. Prices are high, but the pot is reput-

RANS-HIGH MARKET QUOTATION ${f S}$

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Mullumbimby madness	range reefer	oz lb	5-25
Colombian pot	some 'mersh	oz	40-100 75-225 800-1200
Thai sticks	super but sparse	lb one	15-20
Compressed Thai	off and on	100 oz	1000-1200 160-200
Putty hash	Lebanese	lb oz	1100-1600 210-250
Nepalese fingers	Frankenstein critic's choice	lb oz	2800-3000 250-400
Indian hash oil	champagne of oils	lb gm	3000-4500 20-45
Mushrooms	wild	oz oz	420-620 50-75
LSD	Korean "tiles"	one	5-7
Mandrax	Sat. nite	100 one	300-500 3-6
Cocaine	special even in cowboy	100 gm	150-400 140-175
	country	oz	3000-3200
	CANADA		
Commercial	good flow	oz lb	50-65
Colombian Gold and red	gone like the wind	oz	500-650 60-85
Colombian Hawaiian buds	none in sight	lb oz	500-750 325-350
Mexican tops	a few in season	lb oz	2800-3600 50-85
California	nada	lb oz	450-650 200-275
sinsemilla Homegrown pot	mild	lb oz	2000-2600 10-15
Hash	headscratcher red and blond Leb	lb oz	50-200 140-175
LSD	your choice	lb one	1900-2500 4-10
Mandrax	steady	100 one	200-450 3-6
Cocaine	danced on	100 gm	275-450 110-160
Cocame	heavily	oz	1850-2500
S M	COLOMBIA		10-15
Santa Marta golds, reds	slow	oz lb	10-15 60-100
Commercial domestic	usual strong supply	oz lb	2-5 30-80
Colombian hash	forgettable	oz lb	8-25 100-225
Hash oil	a lost cause	oz lb	150-200 1500-2000
Mushrooms	not worth the effort	oz	40-75
Cocaine	good assortment	oz lb	175-225 2500-3000
	DENMARK		
Imported weed	headster's status symbol	oz kilo	75-125 1250-3750
Homegrown pot	subtle, typically	oz	free to \$10
Moroccan hash	European quality better this	oz kilo	50-100 1000-2000
Lebanese hash	year than last transport problems solved	oz	60-120 1200-2200
Black Afghani	top banana	kilo oz	100-2200

edly better than imported commercial Colombian, being a sinsemilla as it is, at \$200 an ounce. Alaska's number one grower specialty, halide-grown sinse, is still flourishing at around \$300 an ounce.

Messages from space: Keep those cards and letters coming, kiddies, especially the ones that start "Every cop in Oklahoma is after me" and "Strict Moslem laws have driven up the price of hash to oil riggers in Saudi Arabia to unbelievable heights." And even if you're not being chased by cops or crazed Moslem inquisitioners, send us the prices from your lotioners, send us the prices from your lo-cale anyway and we'll post it on the big board.

Pakistani hash Cocaine	ditto brisk market	oz gm oz kilo	100-150 100-150 2500 50,000
	DOV! DO		10
C	ECUADOR	1221	7.10
Commercial Colombian	fresh as a flower	lb	7-10 60-100
Red and gold Colombian	surprisingly, not that much	oz lb	15-25 200
Sierra buds	passable	oz	6-10
Esmeraldas	the worst	lb oz	70-100 2-4
swamp grass		lb	40-60
Cocaine base Cocaine	lots pure as the	gm	negotiable 25-40
LSD	driven snow traded for blow		5
الما	traded for blow	one	3
	MEXICO		
Oaxacan tops	from expatriate	oz	12-15
	Texans	lb	75-100
Mexican sinsemilla	worth a shot	oz lb	10-12 80-110
Acapulco gold	yippie	oz lb	10-20 90-130
Guerrero gold	muchos pesos	oz	7-12
Cocaine	when around turkey's special	lb gm	65-125 30-50
Cocame	curacy's special	oz	400-700
	PANAMA		
Seeded redhair	seedy but primo	oz lb	150 1650-1750
Red sinsemilla	still seedy, but	oz	160
Panama red	stingy & stoney rarely red, usually	lb oz	1800 50-65
	green-brown	lb	560
	SAUDI ARAB	Δ	
Black Kashmir	one of the world's	gr	20
hash	great hashes	oz	250
Nepalese hash	fingers only	oz oz	15-20 225-250
Pakistan hash	fresh, pressed	gr oz	10-15 175-200
Afghani hash	greenish black,	gr	10-15
Lebanese red	fumy a choker	oz gr	175-200 10
hash		oz	175-200
Cocaine	no shit, the real thing, but \$	gr	250-300
Thai sticks	great	one	25 50-75
Philippine pot Ups & downs	commercial grade legal, kind of	100	5
Moonshine	homemade	pint	30
	UNITED STAT	ES	
Area Bulletin		12/2/1	0.5
Cincinnati	presentable Ja- maican, maybe	oz	35
Carson City, Nev.	ganja Mexican	oz	100
	sinsemilla		
Anchorage	Thai stick, small buds on	one	20
University of	timberland	oz	160
University of Iowa, Ames	"black medal- lion" Cal sinse	lb	1200-1500
Oklahoma City	disco toot, 10% pure	gr	100
Tulsa	Mandrax, Brit-	one	2.50-4
Austin	ish-style ludes Leb hash,	lb	1000
Seattle	standard milestone mike	one	3
	blotter acid		STAV.
New York	Top-line toot Colombian shake,	gr oz	135 35
Detroit	seedy	-	•••
National Man	kat		
National Mar		oz	125-225
U.S. sinsemilla Commercial	some real cannons trucker's special	oz	10-40
Mexican		lb oz	100-435 45-60
Top-grade Mexican	around once again	lb	475-550
Mexican sinsemilla	and Oaxacan	oz lb	120-145 1200-1500
Jamaican	appears and	oz	35-45
Jamaican	disappears crackeriack	lb oz	375-450 70-100

evaporated

Connoisseur Colombian	disappeared all of a sudden	oz lb	45-55 475-600
Thai sticks	doggy	one	10-25 180-225
Loose Thai	short season	oz	200-220
Various Africans	so what?	lb oz	1950-2400 40-55
Hawaiian	fits and starts	lb oz	425-550 235-300
		lb	2700-3200
Moroccan hash	greenish black	oz lb	150-180 1600-2000
Citrali hash	absent of late	oz lb	175 1825-2200
Lebanese hash	some past its prime	oz lb	100-130 900-1450
Black Afghani	with gold seal	oz	150-200
hash Nepalese fingers	dreamy and	lb oz	1700-2300 175-225
	aromatic	lb	1700-2500
Paki hash	bits and pieces	oz lb	165 1600-1900
Hash oils	Nep honey, terrif	gm oz	35-65 500-1000
Psilocybin	dried,	oz	100-150
mushrooms	encapsulated wet, harder to eat	lb oz	1650 17.50-25
Peyote	tough to come	oz	35-60
LSD	by right now 100 mike blots	lb one	300-500 2-4
LSD	100 make blocs	100	150-300
Cocaine	prices creeping	gm	100-140
	up	1/8 oz	325-350 2000-3000
Methaqualone	some real	one	4-6
Crosses and	bulldozers erratic	100 100	300-500 25-200
black beauts			
Methamphetamine	crystally, potent	gr	125
Alaska			
Commercial	dry & harsh	oz	50-65
Colombian Domestic	alarmingly	lb ¼ oz	550-650 50
sinsemilla	potent	oz	200
Mexican weed	most available	oz lb	50-65 500-600
Mainland	B-grade here;	oz	225-300
sinsemilla Thai sticks	A-1 there lots of lumber	lb one	2000-2750 20
Lebanese hash	big mover	lb gm	2400-2650 10
		oz	130-200
Cocaine	roll of the dice	gm oz	100-175 2000-2800
LSD	G.I. fave	one 100	5 350-500
'Ludes	bootkickers	one	5
		100	350
Hawaii			
Puna buds	victim of	oz	225-275
Kona gold	inflation banana-size buds	lb oz	2200-2750 225-275
		lb oz	2000-2500 250-300
Mauna Loa	short supply	lb	2250-3000
Maui wowie	grower stash grade; other grades less	oz lb	250-300 2700-3200
LSD	fresh from the lab	one	2-4 free
Mushrooms Cocaine	for cheap not a big mover	gm	75-125
Amphetamines	speedy relief	oz one	2050-3000
•			
V	EST GERMA		
Moroccan hash	fresh	gm oz	7 95
		kg	4000
Leb hash	reds, golds	gm oz	60
		NAME .	00

HIGH TIMES welcomes anonymous reports, but please be specific about the area, type, quantity and quality of dope referred to. If you are aware of other prices or have other relevant information or suggestions, please send them in. The THMQ is intended solely for comparative purposes and in no way is meant as an inducement to illegal activity, or as an endearement of dope weapons to fifting or as an endearement of dope weapons to fifting or as an endearement of dope weapons to fifting or as an endearement of dope weapons to fifting or as an endearement of dope weapons to fifting or as an endearement of dope weapons to fifting or as an endearement of dope weapons to fifting or as an endearement of dope weapons to fifting or as an endearement of the second or as a endorsement of dope usage or trafficking, or as an endorsement of any particular dope.

50 mike blotter

LSD

70-100 700-1000 30-40

PCP (phencyclidine)

aka angel dust, hog, Captain Crunch, killer weed, LBJ, and even the peace pill

CHARGES: Causes users to turn into berserk, homicidal, bulletproof maniacs. Causes permanent, recurrent organic psychoses and brain damage. Sprayed on oregano and sold to children in schoolyards. Users particularly like to tear out their eyes and murder close relatives on PCP but never remember their crimes later.

NATURE AND USE: Phencyclidine was developed in the '50s as a short-acting anesthetic that would allow patients to remain conscious but insensible to pain during surgery. It worked fine, but patients tended to go into "emergence deliri-

um"—hallucinations and raving—as it wore off. So it was modified into ketamine (aka Super K) for this purpose, and PCP became strictly a tranquilizer for apes and monkeys, (not hogs or horses or elephants).

Phencyclidine is used, by those who like it, as a trank with hallucinogenic side effects. They smoke it, sprayed on grass or whatever, very carefully, until they lose all physical sensation in the body and appear subjectively to be drifting in space as a disembodied entity: a spurious but dramatic "out of body" feeling. The high lasts about 20 minutes and as it wears off, weird hallucinations

and flashes of paranoia can be expected; knowledgeable dustheads regard it as an interesting part of the high.

Like trank users in general, dustheads use PCP to abolish inhibitions. Intellectually disposed dustheads tend to rave on intolerably about the tremendous and enlightening new intuitions into Reality and Life that the drug affords them.

THE HAZARDS: Because PCP's an anesthetic, people stoned on it tend to bruise and burn themselves while high without noticing it till afterwards, when it's too late for first aid.

A mild OD of PCP will promote total "waking coma" immobility for 20 minutes, followed by massive convulsions and grotesque paranoid delirium. Most dust casualties suffer their worst injuries when cops or hospital orderlies strap them down while they're safely vegged-out. Then, when they start to convulse, they break their arms and legs, thanks to the restraint straps.

PCP ODs usually leave no trace in the victim's memory of the ugly experience. But some of the excess drug can circulate through the victim's system for days causing unexpected "flash-backs" at sporadic intervals: 20-minute PCP space-outs which the individual may or may not consider agreeable.

PCP has been blamed for touching off full-fledged and permanent psychotic states in formerly "prepsychotic" people; but it's never been proven to do so. People accused of violent crimes are

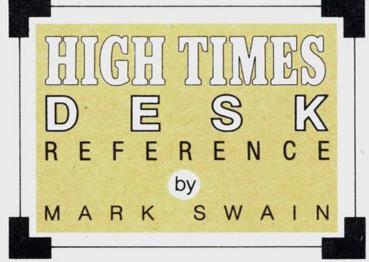
always claiming "diminished capacity" because of PCP they claim to have taken, but judges never listen to that pathetic alibi anymore. *The Journal of Psychotropic Drugs* in 1980 traced down ever extant news reports of people muti-

lating themselves or murdering their relatives on PCP and found that not *one* had any basis in fact: all lies and rumors. The LAPD, which has shot to death several peculiarly behaving dustheads, claims the drug makes you especially resistant to gunshot trauma—but all those dead dustheads and live policemen tend to belie this claim.

FIRST AID: People on mild ODs of PCP tend to sit staring drearily for 20 minutes and then begin shaking violently, raving about real and unreal entities who are after them. No amount of gentle LSD-therapy "talking down" is going to help them for the

10 to 15 minutes this phase lasts. They should be encouraged to kick, writhe, thrash, rave and walk as heartily as they can—without hurting themselves or others—until it wears off. Then they should be fed whole quarts of cranberry juice to pass the drug out of their systems as quickly as possible. They will have only the vaguest recollection of how awful it all was.

People on high ODs of PCP will just pass out, their eyes rolling up into their heads. They should be taken to a hospital as quickly as possible or they're very likely to die within the hour.



ECONOMICS: A dose of PCP goes for anywhere from free to \$20 a spray-on joint, depending on how much PCP is around the local market. PCP is largely made and dealt by local bathtub chemists, since it's easily and quickly synthesized.

Sales of PCP nationwide took a big surge in the mid '70s, thanks largely to new advances in bathtub chemistry. Because it's a white crystal, burn artists were selling it as "coke" for a while, promoting gross ODs and freakouts in would-be cocaine consumers. Real dirt-bags would spray it on oregano and peddle it as grass to buyers who wouldn't know any better at first sight—young kids, mostly—and they'd freak out and get sick. This stirred up a mass-media PCP scare, featuring some of the most ridiculous dope-scare sensationalism since the Reefer Madness heyday of Harry J. Anslinger.

Sales took a terrific drop after 1978, though, when Sen. Lloyd Bentsen (R.-Texas) and the DEA sensibly made PCP's main precursor chemical a "controlled substance," making it unavailable to neighborhood bathtub chemists.

ADDICTION LIABILITY: Cases of addiction to PCP go largely unreported, though the drug does promote notable tolerance development (in monkeys, anyway) and classic trank-type convulsive withdrawals when regular use is sus-pended. Most users find it vaguely disagreeable and never do it often enough to get strung out. Those who really cherish its weirdo high are generally so weird themselves "addiction" just isn't pertinent in the first place.

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Adventure in Paradise Entry Blank/Order Form

L	YES, I wish to place an order a enter the Adventure in Pa	and YES, I wish to radise Sweepstakes.		do not wish to place to enter the Adventu		
UL	TRA-CAINE INCENSE	BOLIVIAN ROCK	INCENSE	PERUVIAN F	LAKE INCE	NSE
	1 Gram \$10. ☐ ½ oz. \$20. ☐ ¼ oz. \$36.	☐ 1 Gram \$10. ☐ % c	oz. \$20. 🗆 ¼ oz. \$36.	☐ 1 Gram \$10.	□ % oz. \$20	. 🗆 ¼ oz. \$36
	% oz. \$70.	□ % oz. \$70.	1 oz. \$140.	☐ % oz. \$70.	□ 10	z. \$140.
3. NO	d fill out the order form. PURCHASE NECESSARY. If you do not wish to place an diventure in Paradise Sweeptstakes, simply check NO are entry per family, please. No mechanically reproduce	nd fill out the official entry blank. Id entries will be accepted. All	ADDRESS			300000000000000000000000000000000000000
ent	tries must be received by July 1, 1982. Send completed e	intres to time wave rioducts,	MUUKESS			
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INTERVIEW

CHARLES BUKOWSKI

HARLES BUKOWSKI KNOWS WHEREOF HE writes. A marginal man, a heavy boozer, a denizen of the seamy L.A. nightlife, Bukowski drew on his rich experience to produce over 30 autobiographical books of poems, short stories and novels.

And they sing. He possesses the hobo vitality of Kerouac, the blunt eroticism of Miller and the whimsical cut-to-the-bone philosophy of Cain. Bukowski came to writing late in life, after a 14-year stint in the post office and a couple of extended stays in prisons and hospitals. But today, at 61, he is on the verge of mass acceptance. His stories are being produced as movies, he's a culture hero all over Europe and his last novel. Women, sold over 100,000 copies in the United States.

And Bukowski rolls on. Like the antihero of his novels, Hank Chinaski, he goes to the track every day and writes at night, with the radio pouring out classical music and the bottle pouring out red grape. Bukowski is currently at work on a novel on his early years, a section of which is excerpted in this issue. Silvia Bizio, an Italian journalist, caught up with Bukowski in his home in San Pedro, California, sometime between the ninth race and the fifth bottle.

HIGH TIMES: They like your stuff in Europe better than they do here. How do you explain that?

BUKOWSKI: Europe is one hundred years ahead in poetry, paintings, art-which is lucky for me. Here there aren't many who appreciate my work. The feminists especially hate me so much because they haven't read everything I have written; they only read parts of it. They get so infuriated they can't read the next page or the next story. That's not my fault; that's their fault. They get too ready to attack without going into the whole ball of shit that I have created.

HIGH TIMES: It's not only them. It seems you have a lot of problems in the Left in general.

BUKOWSKI: The Left doesn't like me? I am the working man, or at least I used to be. HIGH TIMES: Well, at least from what I have seen in America.

BUKOWSKI: Oh, in America? I don't like the Left in America, because they are just wellfed Westwood Village little ninnies screaming slogans. They are too worried about getting a job or getting marijuana or tires for their cars or cocaine or going to a disco-



OTES OFA MAN

theque. So I don't think there is any underground radical movement here. Anything underground radical is media hype, just strict bullshit; and anybody who gets into it will quickly go into anything else that gathers them monetary gains. Abbie Hoffman, all those slickers. The whole Left in Ameri-

ca is just glorious bullshit hype-nothing like the Wobblies in the '20s. The American Left are white-bellied shrieks of nowhere they have always been. At least you could talk to those guys, the Wobblies. I would drink with them; I wouldn't go with them, though. But the Left... They don't know what struggle really means. The fight is in the streets. I come from the streets. I understand the streets. But the streets are the streets: There isn't much you can-do with them. The streets are very beautiful, East Hollywood is very beautiful, Hollywood and Western, Big Sam the Whorehouse Man. The streets are good, they are full of people, marvelous people, and I don't like the rich any more than you do. You can put fifty thousand dollars in my bank, I still don't like the rich. I may eat dinner with them in the same cafés, the maître d' might know my name, but I still don't like them. Because they are dead. I don't like dead people, even if they have one million dollars. I take their million but I don't take them.

HIGH TIMES: You think they are dead because of their money?

BUKOWSKI: I think it helps them. But the poor get dead for the same reason: lack of money. They get hateful, they lash out. So we'll go back to my original equation which I wrote fifty years ago: There are only two things wrong with money: too much or too little. Even when you have just right, sometimes it doesn't quite work. It might be the climate, or the genes, or the person you are living with. Nothing ever works.

HIGH TIMES: You consider yourself apolitical?

BUKOWSKI: Sure, I don't have any politics. Why should I? It's like having gallstones: It costs money to have them removed, so why have them?

HIGH TIMES: I know you don't like political questions, but this has to do with your work. Do you think Reagan's election will bring about some changes in the American cultural world in general and your possibility of being published in particular?

BUKOWSKI: I am not a political person; I

BY SILVIA BIZIO

mean, I cannot foresee, I can only guess and say that the situation will become more repressive. The Moral Majority has voted Mr. Reagan in-many of them are Christian, many are conservative—and naturally Mr. Reagan will see to it that most of their wishes are respected. But I don't give a fuck about it. It will not influence my writing, nor do I think it will influence my publications. My shit is not what you would call dirty in a physical sense; people tend to get nervous about what I write, they tend to hate me. Some poets of the "establishment" here-I know they hate me. I feel their hate, and I think it's good; it shows I am doing something. But, obviously, if everybody hated me, my books wouldn't sell. But many of the people who hate me buy my books. I can imagine what they are thinking: "Okay, I hate this guy so much I want to see what he is going to write next!" It's like at my poetry readings: Half of the people who come hate me. If I hated somebody, I wouldn't go to his reading; I would stay

There always has to be somebody who wants to kill you, run you over with his car, mutilate you, chop up your fingers—somebody who can't sleep at night thinking about you. Of course, with those who hate you come also the ones who love you, and that's pretty hard to take, too, you know? "Oh you are so great, Bukowski! Oh, you saved my life! Oh, Bukowski! Oh, Bukowski!" It makes me sick.

HIGH TIMES: So you almost prefer people who hate you over the ones who love you? BUKOWSKI: Not exactly that but...you know, many times I talk and I say things that I don't really think. I hate to say things that mean exactly what they are, unless it's something exceptionally important. Don't you think it's boring to always say things as they are? I don't just want to say, "Oh, yes, it's good, it's wonderful." It would make me feel too much like a politician. Often I say things that I don't really mean, but almost mean. Sometimes I even write this way. So don't take everything I say by the letter, because it isn't so.

HIGH TIMES: So sometimes you fooled us all with your writings. Is that what you are trying to say?

BUKOWSKI: Sometimes I even fool myself. And sometimes they reject my writing, and they say: "It isn't good at all, Bukowski!" And they are right: I write a lot of shit. Almost intentionally I write a lot of shit, to keep me going, and much of it is not good, but it keeps me exercising. But a lot of it is good. I'd say that seventy-five percent of what I write is good; forty, forty-five percent is excellent; ten percent is immortal, and twenty-five percent is shit. Does it add up to one hundred?

HIGH TIMES: Back to politics: Even though you say you're apolitical, some people see political themes in your work.

BUKOWSKI: They are entirely wrong. There is no political motivation in me. I don't want to save the world, I don't want to make it a better place. I just want to live in it and talk

about what happens. I don't want the whales to be saved, I don't want the nuclear plants to be broken down and taken away: Whatever is here, I am with it. I may say I don't like it, but I don't want to change it. I am very selfish. What I mostly don't like is things like . . . I drive my car down the freeway, I get a flat tire, and I have to get out and change the goddamn thing. I have to change lanes and there isn't any lane on the right-hand side, and I have to get to the track. So you see, I have no profound feelings, I have no profound movement. I have nothing of this wanting anything at all. I just want to brush my teeth and hope my teeth don't fall off; I hope to get a hard-on



next year: just simple little things. I am not looking for big things. I'll settle for small things, like the winner of the third race at the odds of three to one: That's all I want. Nothing very magic; I don't want to extend beyond my boundaries.

HIGH TIMES: You gave me the impression of being timid when I talked with you on the phone the other day.

BUKOWSKI: Well, I am worried about Linda [Beighle, Bukowski's girl friend]. She always senses when I talk to a woman that I am going to rape her. I care very much for Linda so I don't want to create any disturbances. So when I talk to a woman on the telephone I keep it very low tone: "Yes, no, okay." I don't say: "You want to come over for an interview? I'll have some wine, I'll have some logs on the fire, and I'll be all alone, autograph, anything you bring, with a big felt pen, full of writing material...." So I am always very careful to show that I am with somebody.

HIGH TIMES: A lot of women call you?

BUKOWSKI: Well, not now anymore: I am
in hiding. Women come in they are all full

in hiding. Women come in, they are all full of life, and all of a sudden you say, well, when is the time that this thing comes out of the body and the whole face changes, and the smile stops, even sex gets bad. I don't know, I would say thirty-one days after the first meeting, a little devil jumps up and gives the forewording sound of things to come and then goes back and you think you are just imagining things. And six months later the devil really comes out and breaks windows and accuses you of all sorts of things you haven't done. It's a kind

... I would call it a female nervous neurotic energy extending itself upon me, which is all right. One must suffer if one lives with somebody. One must pay for some temporary joy. So I know these things are coming, but each time I think, "I have seen this film before." But I'm sure the woman feels the same: "Oh, no, that happened with Ralph, I thought this one was okay!" So, we start spooking each other with what we are. And if I can't take it, we separate.

I have nothing to say about human relationships except they don't work. They never work: They pretend to work. It's a human truce. The best I heard is when I was working at the post office and this guy was telling me they had been married for fifty years. When he or she woke up he'd look at her and say in a very calm voice: "Now don't start anything and there won't be anything." To me that sums up the whole big thing. He just wanted a truce. Human relationships don't work, but we become together. At the beginning we are all charming. I remember a film with Woody Allen-he's good at this kind of thing-where the woman was saying: "But you are not like we were at the beginning; you were so charming!" And he said: "You know, I was just doing my mating thing, I was using up all my energies. I couldn't keep doing this, I'd go crazy!" So that's what people do at the beginning. You think they are so intelligent, so full of life the first few days. And then reality creeps in. "Jesus Christ, you leave your stockings all over the floor, you idiot asshole jerk! You flushed the toilet and there is still a turd in it!" So, human relationships don't work, they never did and they never will. They are not meant to. People were meant to live half alone and half together. With women I was all charming, but I felt like I was eating raw meat, that I couldn't quite chew too well. It became kind of a dirty trick. I am not religious, but I do have some damn morals of goodness. I don't like to just . .

Well, it's okay, you fuck...I used to... after they'd go to work and I used to open their closets, look at their shoes, and I'd go to their bathroom, and see a picture of their boyfriend, and I'd say, "That jerk! She lives with this guy? I better get out of here!" And they'd say, "Phone me at work," "Hi, baby," but you don't give a shit; you lie in their bed, it's awful, and finally you realize and say, "What the hell am I doing? What am I trying to do?" A piece of ass is not that important! Because after you come, you have to live many hours without coming—at least I do: I am sixty. The whole thing is very confusing. You read the Decameron, Boccaccio. This is what influenced Women a great deal. I loved his idea that sex was so ridiculous, nobody could handle it. It was not so much love with him; it was sex. Love is funnier, more ridiculous. That guy! He could really laugh at it. He must have really gotten burnt about five thousand times to write that stuff. Or maybe he was just a fag; I don't know. So, love is ridiculous because it can't last, and sex is ridiculous because it doesn't last long enough.

HIGH TIMES: So what's not ridiculous?

BUKOWSKI: What's not ridiculous is the inbetween time, waiting between sex and love and facing what is left over with a matter of goodness-not becoming bitter. I think we must become good with what is left in ourselves, with what is left over after it's not good anymore. In other words, to remain whole even though everything is not quite worked out. I think we need a little luck and a little glamour and a little strength and a little moxie just to carry it on. Hemingway would call it "grace in time of trouble," but he said it better than that. Moxie means carrying on when everything feels terrible. You park your car in the garage if you have a garage—if you have a car —you slam the door, you jack off and read a magazine instead of cutting your throat. It means carrying on when everything seems so terrible there is no use to go on, and you don't go to a god, you don't go to a church. You face the wall and just work it out alone. If you don't think that is tough, cookie . . . that is tough, cookie. To run somewhere, to grab something, a god, a woman, a drug, one evening of success, for the night, for the week, the year, for the lifetime; people don't hold still long enough to find out what the hell they are.

HIGH TIMES: I know you'll hate this question, but isn't alcohol an escape too?

BUKOWSKI: I knew you were going to say that. That's why I left it out! But you see, alcohol is such a pleasant god. It allows you to commit suicide and awaken again and kill yourself again. There is something lengthy about an alcoholic's death. Drugs are fast; if you believe in a god, you are completely dead anyhow, because you have given away your whole brain process to somebody other than yourself. Alcohol is a slow process of dying. In other words, you are not quitting all at once. You are quitting inch by inch instead of quickly giving up. You are waiting around until maybe something might happen a little bit better. So I have been doing that since I was fourteen years old. And now I am driving a BMW, I live in a big house, the logs are on the fire, you are interviewing me, things seem better, but I know they are not. I know they are exactly the same: They change shape, but I know they are still very bad. They will always be.

HIGH TIMES: Are you talking only about yourself or the whole world in general?

BUKOWSKI: For me mainly, because I can't do the thinking or feeling for the others. But it seems I am, because often I get many letters in the mail about my writing, and they say: "Bukowski, you are so fucked up and you still survive. I decided not to kill myself," or, "You are such an asshole, man, you gave me the courage to live." So in a way I save people while taking a drink, and waiting. Not that I want to save them: I have no desire to save anybody. But it seems I have saved them. Being an asshole saves an asshole, okay? So these are my readers, you see? They buy my books—the defeated, the

demented and the damned-and I am proud of it.

HIGH TIMES: Are you putting me on?

BUKOWSKI: A little bit, but not completely. Because the main man I attack in my writing is me, and basically I am almost everyone who is around. That's what the feminists seem to miss, the part of the stuff in between the written lines.

HIGH TIMES: Do you consider yourself an erotic writer?

BUKOWSKI: Erotic! I write about everything. The reason sex got into so much of my stories is because when I quit with the post office, at the age of fifty, I had to make money. What I really wanted to do was

books—the defeated, the demented and the damned—and I am proud of it."

write about something that interested me. But there were all those pornographic magazines on Melrose Avenue, and they had read my stuff in the *Free Press*, and started asking me to send them something. So what I would do was write a good story, and then in the middle I had to throw in some gross act of sex. And so I would write a story, and at a certain point I would say: "Well it's time to throw some sex into it." And I would throw some sex in it and kept writing the story. It was okay: I would mail the story and immediately get a three-hundred-dollar check.

HIGH TIMES: But do you see your stories as erotic? Do you think people get excited when they read them?

BUKOWSKI: I don't know. Some people have written me and told me that some of my stories have aroused them. Especially "The Fiend." Now, why the story of a man raping a little girl arouses people I don't know. Perhaps a lot of men want to do it and it is only the law and the fear that prevents them from doing it. Perhaps the fact that I described her clothing, slowly, what happened, has excited somebody. But I didn't get a hard-on while I was writing it. HIGH TIMES: What about Henry Miller? Do you consider Miller an erotic writer?

BUKOWSKI: I can't read Henry Miller. He starts talking about reality but then he becomes esoteric, starts talking about something else. A couple of good pages, and then he goes off on a tangent, enters into abstract areas, and I can't read him anymore. I feel gypped.

HIGH TIMES: Gypped? What do you mean?

BUKOWSKI: He doesn't stay there. I want him to stay in the streets, not in the air.

HIGH TIMES: So good writing is writing that stays in reality, in the streets.

BUKOWSKI: I didn't say it has to be like that; I said that for me it is. So I try to stay in the streets, wherever I am; I try to stay with reality. I only describe things; I don't try to explain them. Only what I know worries me. What I don't know doesn't concern me. It's like at the post office: The boys used to say, "What I don't know doesn't hurt me. If my wife is fucking someone else, if I don't know it, it doesn't exist." All I know is what I see. I am in bed watching TV, all I know is Johnny Carson: That's reality!

I guess I am closer to the street people than I am to anybody, and when you get anybody who is a little higher, he becomes a mark. So that's why you have to lay low, do your work and just be quiet. Do your screaming in the pages but don't let them see you too often. Think about it: What is it that creates some kind of magic between somebody who creates and somebody who listens to creation? The magic I think often is the person who secludes himself from the masses; not deliberately, but it has to be done. Once the artist starts mixing with the masses, the artist becomes the masses.

HIGH TIMES: Is that why you didn't go to the International Poetry Festival of Castelporziano in Italy last summer? You were one of the "big absents" there.

BUKOWSKI: I didn't go because I didn't like the line of American poets I would be reading with. I would not read with them in Santa Monica, California; I wouldn't even be in the same room with them. So that's why I didn't go: I didn't like the company. I don't want to name anybody, but if it's true that they were bombarded with sand balls as you tell me, I am pleased. That's what I feel like doing when they read: I feel like vomiting and throwing my vomit at them. HIGH TIMES: But those people wanted to hear Bukowski and Ginsberg...

BUKOWSKI: No, wait a minute, let's not confuse—

HIGH TIMES: All right, but Allen is a big idol in Italy, as you are.

BUKOWSKI: Who, Allen? [Sarcastically:] Allen is okay, Allen is all right, yes, they are all good poets: Gregory Corso, and Ginsberg's boyfriend, and Joan Baez, Timothy Leary, Frank Zappa, Bob Dylan... American culture is all right. American culture is all right. American culture is... I think the whole thing has a big lag. It's like a body dragging a tail, but the tail is behind the body dragging in the dust.

HIGH TIMES: What is the best compliment that a male reader can give you? And what is the best compliment that a female reader can give you?

BUKOWSKI: The female readers are all the same. When I am at a poetry reading they come and say, "I am going to fuck you." The men don't say that; they say, "Hey, man, you are great!" So the women readers excite me a little bit more. I think men like me more.

HIGH TIMES: In your books you always talk



about your sexual pleasure, but we don't know much of how the women feel making love with you.

BUKOWSKI: Well, of course, I start with my pleasure; if there is something left, they can take it. When I am satisfied, it's all over. Ten seconds, it's finished. Sometimes it's only three or four seconds, and there is never any foreplay. It's all there: Get over there, let's get it out of the way so I can watch TV. That's the way I do it.

HIGH TIMES: And so then Johnny Carson is a good conclusion . . .?

BUKOWSKI: Johnny Carson after sex? Sometimes it's better than the sex that preceded it; sometimes it's not. We all have bad nights.

HIGH TIMES: Aren't you concerned about how women feel making love with you?

BUKOWSKI: Are you talking about that sex liberation bullshit? Well, okay, sometimes I tried to do all I could: a lot of foreplay; I know where the clitoris is, I know how to do all these things, I know, I know.

HIGH TIMES: Aren't you worried about your reputation?

BUKOWSKI: As a big lover? No, if they don't like what I am doing, they go to another man, which is what they usually do. Let them do all the foreplay.

HIGH TIMES: Is it true that you started writing Women after several years of celibacy? BUKOWSKI: Several? It must have been ten, twelve, since the last time I had had sex. You need to recharge your sperm. Or perhaps I think that I have always known that women are trouble more than anything

HIGH TIMES: But you had to go through that experience, and start sleeping with women again . . .

BUKOWSKI: Because I thought that being a writer, and having been without women for twelve years...you can write a lot of things, but if you lack the other half of the human race, you are not a complete human being, you don't know what the hell is going on, right? I mean, you need a certain balance. If you want to write bad things about women, you have to live with them first. So I live with them in order to criticize them in my writings.

Do you think it was so terrible to be without sex in those twelve years? I was preparing for the tempest of women who would have arrived. Perhaps I knew it was going to happen. It's not a decision I made: Things in life just happen. I didn't have my first fuck until I was twenty-three. Now I am sixty-one years old and I had my last one last year.

HIGH TIMES: Really? Why?

BUKOWSKI: It allows me to pick the winners better at the track. To me, sex is like a peanut butter sandwich.

What do you think happens when people arrive at a certain age when sex is not possible anymore? You can't love that person anymore? What's all this big deal about sex? Does everything have to be sex? Can't I continued on page 98

Finally, after 7 years



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I was coming home from classes down Westview hill. Of course, I never had any books to carry. I had sold them all for drink. I passed my exams by listening to the class lectures and by guessing at the answers. I never had to cram for exams. I could get my "Cs." And as I was coming down the hill I ran into a giant spiderweb. I was always doing that. I stood there pulling the sticky webs from myself and looking for the spider. Then I saw him: a big fat black son of a bitch. I walked over and crushed him. I hated spiders. When I went to hell I would be eaten by a spider.

All my life in that neighborhood I had been walking into spiderwebs, I had been attacked by blackbirds, I had lived with my father. Everything was eternally dreary, drab, damned; even the weather was insolent and bitchy: It was either too hot for weeks, or it started raining, and when it rained it always rained for five or six days. The water came up over the lawns and into the houses. Who'd ever planned the drainage system had gotten overpaid for his excellent ignorance about such matters.

And my own affairs were as bad as the day I had been born. The only difference was that now I could catch a drink now and all other things just kept picking and pickwasher.

Maybe I'd be a bank robber. Some goddamned thing. Something with flair, fire. You only had one shot at it. Why be a window washer?

I lit a cigarette and walked further down the hill. Was I the only person who was distracted by a future without a chance?

then, though never often enough. Drink was the only thing that could keep a man from feeling forever stunned and useless; ing, hacking away. And nothing was interesting, nothing. The people were restrictive and careful, all alike. And I've got to live with these fuckers, I thought. God, they all had their assholes and sexual organs and their mouths and their armpits. They shit and they chattered and they were dull as horse dung. The girls looked good from a distance, the sun shining through their dresses, their hair. But get up close and listen to their minds coming out of their mouths, you felt like digging under a hill with a tommy gun. I would never be able to get married, I could never have children. Hell, I couldn't even get a job as a dish-

I saw another one of those big black spiders. He was about face high, right in my path. I took my cigarette and placed it upon him. The tremendous web shook and leaped as he jumped about; the branches of the bush trembled. He leaped out of the web and upon the sidewalk. Cowardly killers, the whole batch of them. I crushed him with my shoe. A worthy day, I had killed two spiders, I had upset the balance of nature-now we would be eaten up by the bugs and flies.

I walked further down the hill, I was near the bottom when a large bush began to shake. The king spider was after me. I walked forward to face it.

My mother leaped out from behind the bush: "HENRY, HENRY, don't go home, don't go home, your father will kill you!"

"How's he going to do that? I can take his ass.

"No, he's FURIOUS, Henry! Don't go home, he'll kill you! I've been waiting behind this bush for hours!"

My mother's eyes were wide with fear and quite beautiful, large and brown.

"What's he doing home this early?"

"He had a headache, he got the afternoon

"I thought you were working, that you'd found a new job?"

She'd gotten a job as a housekeeper.

"He knew where I was! He came and got me! He's FURIOUS! He'll KILL YOU!"

"Don't worry, Mom, I'll go in and kick his goddamned ass, I promise you."

"HENRY, HE FOUND YOUR SHORT STORIES AND HE READ THEM!"

"I never asked him to read them."

"HE FOUND THEM IN A DRAWER! HE READ THEM, HE READ ALL OF THEM!

I had written ten or twelve short stories. Give a man a typewriter and he becomes a writer. I had hidden the stories under the paper covering of my short and stocking drawer.

"Well," I said, "the old man poked around and he got his fingers burned."

"HE SAID THAT HE WAS GOING TO KILL YOU! HE SAID THAT NO SON OF HIS COULD WRITE STORIES LIKE THAT AND LIVE UNDER THE SAME ROOF WITH HIM!"

I took her by the arm. "Let's go home, Mom, and see what he does . . .

"HENRY, HE'S THROWN ALL YOUR CLOTHES OUT ON THE FRONT LAWN, ALL YOUR DIRTY LAUNDRY, YOUR TYPEWRITER, YOUR SUITCASE AND YOUR STORIES!"

"My stories?"

"Yes, those too . . ."

"I'll kill him!"

I pulled away from her and walked

AN EXCERP DMA IN PROGRES

BY CHARLES BUKOWSKI



across 21st Street and toward Longwood Avenue. She was after me.

"HENRY, HENRY, DON'T GO IN THERE!"

The poor woman was yanking at the back of my shirt.

"Henry, listen, get yourself a room somewhere! Henry, I have ten dollars! Take this ten dollars and get yourself a room somewhere!"

I turned. She was holding out the ten.

"Forget it," I said, "I'll just go."

"Henry, take the ten! Do it for me! Do it for your mother!"

"Well, all right..."

I took the ten, put it in my pocket.

"Thanks, that's a lot of money."

"It's all right, Henry. I love you, Henry, but you must go."

She ran ahead of me as I walked toward the house. Then I saw it: Everything was across the lawn, all my dirty and clean laundry, the suitcase flung there open, stockings, shirts, pajamas, an old robe, everything flung everywhere upon the lawn and into the street. And I saw my manuscript pages being blown in the wind; they were in the gutter, everywhere.

My mother ran up the driveway toward the house and I screamed after her so he could hear me: "TELL HIM TO COME OUT HERE AND I'LL RIP HIS GOD-DAMNED HEAD OFF!"

I went after the pages of my manuscripts first. That was the lousiest of the blows, doing that to me. That was one thing he had no right to touch. As I picked up each page in the gutter, on the lawn and down the street, I began to feel better. I found every page I could, placed them in the suitcase under the weight of a shoe, then went to the typewriter. It had broken out of its case but it looked all right. Then I looked at the rags scattered about. I left the dirty laundry, I left the pajamas, which were only a sent-down pair of his discards. There wasn't much to pack. I closed the suitcase, picked it up with the typer and started to walk away. I could see two faces peering from behind the drapes. Then I forgot that, walked up Longwood, across 21st and up the old Westview hill. I didn't feel much different than I had ever felt. I was neither elated nor dejected; it was just a continuation of the same dull drag. I was going to take the old W streetcar, get a transfer and go somewhere downtown. Anybody could do that.

I found a room on Temple Street in the Filipino district. It was \$3.50 a week, upstairs on the second floor. The toilet and tub were down the hall but there was a wash basin to piss in.

My first night there I found a bar downstairs just to the right of the entrance. I liked that: All I had to do was to climb the stairway and I was home. The bar was full of the little dark men but they didn't bother me. I'd heard all the talk about them—that they liked blond white girls, that they carried stilettos, that they were all the same size and that seven of them chipped in and bought one expensive suit, with accessories, and they each got to wear the suit one day a week. George Raft said that the Filipinos set the style trends. They stood on street corners and swung long golden chains around and around, thin golden chains, seven or eight inches long, each man's chainsize indicating the size of his penis.

The bartender was a Filipino.

"You're new, huh?" he asked.

"I live upstairs. I'm a student."

"No credit."

I put some coins down.

"Give me an Eastside."

He came back with the bottle.

"Where can a fellow get a girl?" I asked. He picked up some of the coins.

"I don't know anything," he said and walked to the register.

rs. Kansas, they called her....
Her breasts were something that any average mortal would never see totally—they were for kings, dictators, rulers, Filipinos.

That first night I closed the bar. Nobody bothered me. A few blond women left with the Filipinos. The men were quiet drinkers. They sat in little groups with their heads close together, talking, now and then laughing in a very quiet manner. I liked them. When the bar closed and I got up to leave the bartender said, "Thank you." That was never done in American bars, not to me anyhow.

I liked my new situation. All I needed was money...

I decided to keep going to college; it would give me some place to stay in the daytime. My friend Becker had dropped out. There wasn't much anybody I cared for there except maybe the instructor in anthropology, a known Communist. He didn't teach much anthropology, but he was a large man, casual and likable.

"Now the way you fry a porterhouse steak," he told the class, "you get the pan red hot, you drink a shot of whiskey and then you pour a thin layer of salt across the pan, then you drop the steak in but not for too long. Then you flip it, seal in the other side to a fast crisp, take it out, drink another shot of whiskey, take the steak out and eat it immediately."

Once when I had been stretched out on the campus lawn he had come walking by and had stopped and stretched out beside

"Chinaski, you don't believe all that Nazi hokum you're spreading around, do you?"

"I'm not saying. Do you believe your crap?"

"Of course I do."

"Good luck."

"Chinaski, you're nothing but a Wiener schnitzel..."

He got up, brushed off the grass and leaves and walked away...

I had been at the Temple Street place for a couple of days when Jimmy Hatcher found me. He just knocked on the door one night and I opened it and there he was with two other guys, fellow aircraft workers, one guy called Delmore, the other, Fastshoes.

"How come he's called 'Fastshoes'?"

"You ever lend him money, you'll know..."

"Come on in... How the Christ did you find me?"

"Your folks had you traced here by a private dick."

"Damn, they still know how to take the joy out of a man's life."

"Maybe they're worried?"

"If they're worried all they have to do is send money."

"They claim you'll drink it."

"Then let them worry..."

They came in and sat on the bed and the floor. They had a fifth of whiskey and some paper cups. Jimmy poured them around.

"Nice place you've got here..."

"It's great. I can see the City Hall every time I stick my neck out the window."

Fastshoes pulled a deck of cards from his pocket. He was sitting on the rug. He looked up at me.

"You gamble?"

"Every day. You got a marked deck?"

"Hey, you son of a bitch! . . . "

"Don't curse me or I'll have your wig on my mantelpiece."

"Honest, man, these cards are straight!"
"All I can play is poker and 21. What's the limit?"

"Two bucks."

"We'll split for the deal."

I got the deal and called for draw poker, regular. I didn't like wild cards, it just became too much luck that way. Two bits to the kitty. As I dealt, Jimmy poured another round.

"How do you make it, Hank?"

"I write class and term papers for other people."

"Brilliant."

"Yeah . . . "

"Hey, you guys," said Jimmy, "I told you this guy was a genius."

"Yeah," said Delmore. He was to my right. He opened.

"Two bits," he said.

We followed him in.

"Three cards," said Delmore.

"One," said Jimmy.

"Three," said Fastshoes.

continued on page 103

HIGH TIMES Rates the Legal Highs

by Dean Latimer, Sordid Affairs Editor

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EVERYONE KNOWS THE SURE AND CERTAIN HORRORS OF JUNK FOOD. It was Twinkies and assembly-line cheeseburgers, after all, that so deranged the manly sensibilities of Dan White in 1978 that, in a fit of hypoglycemic homophobia, he slaughtered San Francisco officials George Moscone and Harvey Milk. So grievous and obvious was the damage wrought on White's poor mind by cardboard calories and pasteboard protein that an all-heterosexual jury fed him a compassionately meager five to seven for double homicide.

But how few of us are aware of the threat and menace of junk dope? The magazines, the streets, the pharmacies of the country are full of it. It is a plague so insidious, a specter so spectral, that absolutely no harm at all is caused by it. No harm at all! It is the silent forces of nature, the most invisible, which are the most impalpable.

Junk dope. Drugs that do nothing at all, one way or another, except to fatten the bank accounts of those who traffic in them. Junk dope. Drugs that in some cases might even produce a discernible effect on people who buy them, of their own free will! Junk dope. What is the notorious fate of nations, cultures, peoples-yea,

whole civilizations!-in which junk dope has reared its insidiously impotent head? Still, junk dope somehow finds its votaries. In the largest city of our nation, in fact, dwells a secret but notorious clique of self-avowed junk-dope abusers. Gainfully employed, taxpaying men (and one woman), just like you and me, but who think it "smart" to take an occasional "snort" of Pro Crystal II. Men (and a woman) who secretly pass among themselves recipes for yohimbine "tea" (as they call it), and who resort to butyl nitrite "poppers" for kicks! Men (and at least one woman) who would just as leave smoke a hand-rolled cigarette of kava-kava and damiana, and then have sex with a woman (or man, in one case)—days or weeks later, sometimes! Namely certain staff members of High Times, the "wholly pornographic" * "drug-cult" ** magazine!

Junk dope "connoisseurs": Andy Kowl, Ratso Sloman, Bob Sacks, George Barkin, Sheera Stern, Bob LaBrasca, Dean Latimer, Antonio Huneeus and country-western star and HIGH TIMES contributing editor Kinky Friedman. Listen here to their ravings.

HIGH TIMES_ The Test

- 1. Did the product get you high?
- 2. If yes, for how long?
- 3. Did you experience any unpleasant side effects? Compare and contrast this product with the illegal
- 5. What, if any, perceptual changes did the product induce?
- 6. Imagine you are at a singles bar. Someone you have never seen before in your life comes up and says, "Hello, I have a back at my apartment." Would you leave
 - lot of
 - What does the product make you want to do? 8. Under what circumstances would you prefer this product to
 - 9. To whom would you recommend this product?
 - What type of sex would you like to have under the

 - Under the influence of this product, is the prospect of influence of this product?
 - hacking up your loved one with an ax made in any way
 - 12. Do you think you have sustained permanent brain damage from the use of this product? If so, kindly describe.
 - What, in your estimation, would be the likely effect of mass distribution of this product among minority groups?

George Barkin, who is finishing up a Ph.D. in some damn-fool academic discipline or other, George Barkin, who is inisining up a Ph.Li in some damn-jool academic assequine or other made up that checklist. Sensible folks like Barkin might fancy it reasonable to assume that made up that checklist. Sensible folks like Barkin might fancy it reasonable to assume that people with formidably extensive experience of real drugs ought to most realistically and dependably be able to assess the qualities of fake dope. Winetasters are qualified to condemn Ripple, aren't they? So it follows that we natural-born junkies who haunt this magazine will be Ripple, aren't they? So it follows that we natural-born junkies who haunt this magazine will be unfavorably contrasting Toot to the Real Thing, in indignant detail, won't we natural-born junkies who haunt they?

of course it doesn't work that way at all with dope. No matter how desperately we naturally course it doesn't work that way at all with dope. No matter how desperately we naturally course it doesn't work that way at all with dope. No matter how desperately we naturally contain the dots of anything even if it Of course it doesn't work that way at all with dope. No matter now desperately we naturally born junkies try to hide it, we're all so cravenly grateful to get a free hit of anything even if it only looks like the real stiff how should use on putting it down without committing the sin of born junkies try to hide it, we're all so cravenly grateful to get a free hit of anything even if it only looks like the real stuff, how should we go putting it down without committing the sin of hypocrisy? If we'd paid good money for it, that'd be another set and setting.

"OTHER" CAINES

There was one thing everyone was ready to try: the allegedly invigorating white substances that look uncannily like heavily sifted and profoundly cut street cocaine. The "other" caines: Toot, Supertoot, Substitoot, Ultra Caine, Pseudo Caine, Supercaine and Pro Crystal II. A little grainier than table salt but considerably less flaky than confectioner's sugar, their texture is

[·] War on Drugs

^{· ·} Newsweek

just demoniacally suggestive of the sort of coke recognized by most people in this country who have ever done coke. Good, pure cocaine is a great deal clunkier in texture and pearlier in luster than this stuff, but how many people in the last seven or eight years have ever seen good cocaine, cut less than three-quarters of weight with mannitol sugar or inositol? It would be libelous to come right out and say that the brilliant people who merchandise these ersatz caines have clearly taken demoniacal pains to counterfeit an inferior commercial form of a scheduled substance that is abused by an awful lot of rich and trendy people in America. Therefore we will not say it.

As an incense, though, it really sucks. Lay it on tinfoil, as the directions stipulate, and torch it up from beneath, and this white stuff just turns liquid and runs off into a bloody-colored sluice. The smoke given off has no odor at all, which is precisely what you'd expect of the actual contents: caffeine, phenylpropanolamine and some numbing agent, a topical anesthetic like lidocaine or procaine.

It melts right neatly into the old nasal-

membrane mucus vesicles, however, with minimal clottage or waxy buildup. There's a most decided freeze to it for a good half hour after snorting, just as though some dentist had slipped you a hot shot of Novocaine right into the nasal septum and anesthetized all your sinuses and the roof of your palate from the uvula to between the front teeth. A most capital snot detergent. For someone with prior experience with cocaine, and especially for someone who wants coke desperately, the texture of this incense and its superfreeze combined ought to set off a satisfying Pavlovian response. You will get high, whether there's any drug actively involved or not.

The first time Toot and its brethren showed up on these premises, for example—a few lids some of the makers gave us last year, on request—we laid out a few lines on a mirror, suggestively embellished the display with razor and straw, and coaxed our own Bob Sacks in from production for the hood-winking. Sacks, an experienced and worldly fellow (to put it lightly), estimated after a double-barreled noseful that while it looked good and froze nice, no person who tried to peddle this to his friends as coke



I still have great confidence that these "other" caines may help some of us, at least.

BUTYL NITRITE

There was no shortage of people ready to try butyl nitrite either, strictly in the interests of "scientific research." We had available any number of different brands of butyl-Locker Room, Zap Zolid, Quick Silver-and it was fortifying to see that hardly anyone recorded any difference between one brand and another. There certainly ought to be no material difference between any two brands of butyl, see, since butyl nitrite is butyl nitrite, and not any other damn-fool thing. The only reason manufacturers give different brand names to their butyl is so that the distributors will know to whom to send the respective proceeds. Undoubtedly nearly everyone who does butyl has a particular brand-name preference, but there's no good reason for it. Butyl is butyl, and there's an end to it: a room odorizer, plain and simple.

However, as a room odorizer, butyl really bites the big one, as a matter of official court record. This happened in the spring of 1978, in Connecticut Superior Court, where a judge was ruling on the constitutionality of a state law forbidding the sale of butyl products. A manufacturer, in challenging the law, presented two whole days of expert testimony from Dr. Eugene Nickerson of McGill University, who writes the section on "inhalant nitrites" for every edition of Goodman & Gilman's Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics. Goodman & Gilman, which sits in every doctor's office in the civilized world, qualifies as divinely inspired holy writ, achieved and immutable, on any subject pertaining to drugs; so that Dr. Nickerson, when it comes to butyl nitrite,

has a qualification of veritas approximating St. Paul's.

Butyl nitrite is less toxic than most tap water, Dr. Nickerson candidly advised the Connecticut court. All it is, see, is amyl nitrite with a couple extra left-handed molecular radicals; it has exactly the same pharmacological effects as amyl, only it evaporates quicker when exposed to air, which is a boon to the merchandisers. For about 30 seconds after a whiff it directly relaxes all the smooth-muscle tissues in the body, most notably the veins; the whiffer's blood pressure drops amain, and the heartbeat speeds up 30-some percent to compensate for it. That's the only direct physical effect of butyl nitrite, though after repeated whiffs a butyl freak may sustain "rebound vasoconstriction" in the head, resulting in a headache, which is exactly the same thing as an alcohol hangover.

What about this passing-out business noted in some butyl whiffers, Dr. Nickerson was asked. This turned out to be fairly amusing, one of Mother Nature's practical jokes. Right after a person has whiffed butyl, for as long as the high lasts one's veins are so profoundly relaxed that one's whole circulatory system is pretty much gravitational. Thus, if a reclining whiffer is to stand up quickly just then, all the blood stays where it is, in terms of sea-level altitude, while the body rises. All the blood drains out of the head, and the incautious upriser blacks out from oxy-dep and falls down. Once recumbent again, the blood flows straight back into the whiffer's head, and consciousness returns with a few blinks and an "oh, wow." Less toxic than tap water, but a hell of a lot funnier.

As to the heartbeat rise, it's mere tachy-

cardia, in no wise to be dreaded by any reasonably healthy person. In fact, the specific pharmacological use for amyl nitrite, for over a century, was to forestall attacks of angina pectoris in high-risk heart patients. They carried amyl poppers around with them, and anytime they felt the chest pains start to come on they popped one under the nose; the tachycardia straightened out the heart rate, and they were better and safer for it. Amyl has been lately replaced for this purpose by nitroglycerin, which is cheaper; but in over a century of extensive use by thousands of chronic, high-risk heart patients, Nickerson told the court, not once was it ever implicated as a cause of death.

As to sexuality, Nickerson could only affirm that some abusers have reported that butyl enhances certain recherché sexual activities. Himself, he only does it once or twice a year, at the beginning of a new medschool term at McGill. By way of illustrating the exceptional rapidity of onset of any inhaled drug, he'll whiff an amyl popper in front of the class and let them observe how quickly it makes his face flush red. And Dr. Nickerson is in his 60s.

Toward the end of Nickerson's testimony, the judge observed that for some time he'd had a couple of vials sitting open on the bench, right next to his elbow, and had been getting nothing at all from them. He sounds vaguely disappointed on the transcript. As a room odorizer, then, this stuff was clearly farshimmelt. On the other hand, opined His Honor, he could see little point to a law prohibiting people from access to something that has no other effect than to "enhance sexual intercourse." And today we can buy butyl in Connecticut just like anywhere else.

This trial did not, by stipulation before-

would ever have them coming back to buy anything *else* as long as they lived. Sacks was not surprised to learn that there was no coke in this stuff at all.

By contrast, Ratso got positively strung out behind a batch of Toot, as long as it lasted. It seems Sloman walked into my office while I was absent, spied this artfully arranged white powder and cocaine paraphernalia there, and cravenly hooked up a couple snorts on the sly, painfully endeavoring to leave no evidence of this larceny. So between the suggestive texture, the freeze and the highly clandestine nature of this activity, the editorial director of HIGH TIMES cranked himself into a whole 20-minute coke buzz, with all the tingly trimmings.

"But Larry, there wasn't any coke in it," I marveled, when the guilt finally got on him so bad he asked if maybe he could pay for a spoon or so of that frosty white matter. "It's just junk dope. We got a whole carton of it from California."

"A carton?" says Sloman. "Where's the rest of it?" And he honked off about three ounces of it over one three-day weekend, with the assistance of Kinky Friedman's capacious nostrils.

So I still have great confidence that these "other" caines may help some of us, at least, to transcend the confines of placebo mechanics. If you've ever been high on coke before, there's no good reason Presto-Caine shouldn't get you high just as well.

Placebo mechanics. A few years back, see, docs at Albert Einstein University in the Bronx did a wonderful rat study on placebo mechanics. Every day for weeks, Dr. Stan Schiff put rats in special Skinner boxes every few hours, shooting them up with methamphetamine, setting off a special bell and a light at the moment of each injection. The doses were so stiff that presently the rats were going into acute toxic psychosisdog shaking, tooth gnashing, cartwheeling-every time he put them in the box, of course. And when he checked out their bloodstream hormone levels while they were crazy, he found them saturated with dopamine, the nerve juice that makes schizophrenics and crank freaks see things that aren't really there.

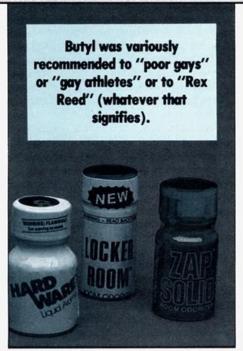
Once this had happend every day for about a month—nearly a year, by any Sprague-Dawley's interior clock—Dr. Schiff abruptly switched the hypodermic dose from speed

to pure salt solution. Sure enough, the rats still went bananas every time they went back in *that* box, with *that* bell, *that* light and *that* punctury sensation in the belly. And when he checked the hormone levels, they were still pullulant with crazy-making dopamine. And the poor critters were still making themselves bananas behind pure salt water for weeks after the speed was discontinued.

Now, the high-making neurohormone tickled up by cocaine is mere norepinephrine, a stand-up-and-cheer sort of *exalting* brain juice, associated with patriotism, paternal benevolence, erotic anticipation and general pridefulness that goeth before a fall. It is infinitely more accessible and milder in effect than crazy-making dopamine, its precursor hormone. People can actually learn to raise or lower their overall norepinephrine activity at will, without drugs, by elementary biofeedback and meditation exercises.

The "other" caines, then, with the texture and freeze of cocaine, have these two particular "reinforcing" elements that *ought* to kindle up a cocaine buzz in people predisposed to it. They even have a couple bona

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hand between the opposing sides, take up the question of how amyl ever came to be a prescription drug in the first place. The answer is quite simple, and very colorful: because it was abused almost exclusively, when it was OTC, by homosexual males. Amyl and butyl still have a loathsome word-of-mouth reputation because of that. God, when I was a Summer of Love hippie, doing bathtub acid and STP and PCP and crystal crank with all my mates, we were unanimously scared to death of ever touching amyl or butyl. "Bad heart-attack dope," we called it: "Brain-damage city, man." That was the word for the nitrites, and you'd sooner have stooped to heroin than touch that awful shit.

We straight hippies were such a bunch of natural-born closet queens, see, that though we might have had no conscious prejudices against gay human beings, we were just exceedingly ready to regard their chosen dope with superstitious awe and opprobrium. The fags were doing it simply because it got them high and tickled their assholes a little (the anal sphincter being smooth-muscle tissue), but to us they were doing it because it was an evil and destructive substance. Talk about your bedpan saying your urinal stinks...

Of course, one thing we had in common, hippies and fags alike, was infiltrating undercover cops. The police started looking into homosexual activities heavily around 1966, when the gay communities in New York and San Francisco began visibly organizing. Perfectly ready themselves to believe any outlandish antigay libels, the cops were actually looking for evidence of Commie infiltration in gay-rights groups. So imagine, now, being the poor Red Squad rookie who pulled that detail: lots of humiliating hanky-panky in the locker room while you put on your glad rags, no doubt, and then when you got to the fag bar, wouldn't some leather queen snap an amyl popper under your nose and grope you breathless while the paralysis lasted. "Oh look, Miss Thing is packing a .38 above her little buns. How

So the cops went to amyl's manufacturer, Burroughs-Wellcome, as early as '66, demanding that this disgusting drug be put on a restrictive 'script schedule. Since it only would've raised Burroughs-Wellcome's liability-insurance rates to have amyl nitrate upscheduled, they held out fiercely against it for three years, hoping the cops would get

fed up with investigating gays for Communism, and drop the scheduling demand. And in fact that happened. But when Nixon launched his famous War on Drugs in 1970, amyl went straight on the 'script list simply because some cops, four years before, had recommended it. Just because fags were doing it in the '60s.

If you ever want to get a solid assessment of how harmless butyl has to be, you can call the National Institute on Drug Abuse and talk to poor Dr. Charles Sharp there, who covers the "inhalants" beat. Literally millions of Americans are doing butyl nowadays, with reckless abandon, even middle-aged householders with all sorts of complicated circulatory disorders. But can NIDA cite one case of butyl-inflicted morbidity or mortality? Beyond a half dozen or so instances of people who drank it, obviously by way of premeditated suicide, butyl horror stories are awfully hard to come by. Poor Dr. Sharp has been reduced to speculating that since butyl and amyl are nitrites, then maybe they're carcinogenic in the very long term, like nitrosamines in preserved bacon: which is about as remote a speculation as anyone could ever conjure up.

Overall there's still a love-hate hangover in public attitudes toward butyl, though, to go by the official test results here. No one said they would go home from a pickup bar to the abode of someone who had a lot of butyl there: "I'd wonder what anyone was doing with a lot of this shit!" Only one person was inspired by butyl to any sort of sexual activity, and that was "mitosis." On the other hand, everybody got high off it, in one case for ten minutes straight—which is roughly ten times longer than butyl is phar-

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OZIUM AIR CONDITIONE

"Now, what does propylene glycol do for your head?" I kept quietly asking myself. Though it is nowhere mentioned in The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics, or even The High Times Encyclopedia of Recreational Drugs, propylene glycol was the prime ingredient in two offerings on the junk-dope table. One was a plastic bottle of pinkish fluid called Motion Lotion: a remnant from a Lower East Side botánica, one of those

Santeria lotions certain minority persons put on themselves to occultly provoke the amorous inclinations of others. The main one was a

"Hey, you want to try some of this Ozium?" "That's not dope, it's air freshener." "With a name like Ozium?" "It's air freshener, Latimer."

devilishly pretty compressed-air spray tube, a six-inch length of gleaming-metal smoothness like a Mace antipersonnel gimmick, which when pressed ejaculated a fine spray of liquid that dissolved in the air, leaving a mildly metallic chemical afterstench. It was called, tantalizingly, Ozium.

"Ozium": ozone and opium? What a terrific high that would be! Whoever was putting out this Ozium knew what they were about, too, very obviously. Most junk dope comes in dispensers so vile and rudimentary-twist-cap bottles and plastic baggies, mostly-that the FDA could probably wreck the whole industry just by insisting on childproof containers for all these products. This Ozium spray tube, though, was a most handsomely tooled and crafted gimmick, a formidably sophisticated article of paraphernalia indeed.

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NITROUS OXIDE

This had to be done quick. No case of nitrous-oxide chargers will last long around the HIGH TIMES premises. In fact, if you want to know the single drug that has been most intimately and ubiquitously involved in the rise and flourishing of this magazine -more influential than reefer and coke put together, actually-it is that most splendid and venerable invention of Sir Humphrey Davies: nitrous oxide. So even though we scored some 200 individual tubes of it, it was mandatory to have it tested as quickly as possible before somebody ripped it all off.

Yeah, it's shameful. You could keep a pound of priceless Humboldt indica skunk unattended in the copy editor's cage here for days, and no one would rip it off, out of plain drug-culture ethics. But turn your back on a box of cheap whipped-cream chargers, it'll be six blocks away before you can turn around again. Nitrous junkies, a shameful thing. How is one to do a scientific nitrous survey using a population of wholly abandoned and regretless nitrous junkies?

On the other hand, when you get right

down to it, who the hell needs a scientific nitrous survey anyway? Here is a semilegal substance that will get you higher than a baboon in a baobab tree, and twice as ridiculous. For sure, a few years back the Journal of the American Medical Association actually managed to scrape up a few case histories of people who'd managed to hurt themselves with the stuff. When you empty out a whipped-cream spray can and then run your nitrous charger through it, there's generally a rubber valve in the whipped-cream can somewhere that, when frosted by nitrous, will give off a half dozen poisonous gases; so if you go through a couple hundred nitrous charges a day, steadily, for weeks on end, you risk coming down with a temporary nervous affliction eerily resembling multiple sclerosis. So it's advisable not to do it that way.

It's best to just fill up your balloon straight out of a professional anesthesia tank. But this has its problems too. Our esteemed Native American correspondent, Mr. Johnny Bob, was given a whole five-foot tank of nitrous as barter payment for his first HIGH TIMES confessional a few years back (which saved us a cool \$400.) That was one happy Indian for a couple of weeks, until the inevitable ennui set in. The poor Nootka brave, ulticontinued on page 76



LETTUCE OPIUM

"Of all the junk on this table," one tester speculated, "this is the only one so far that's paid off at all."

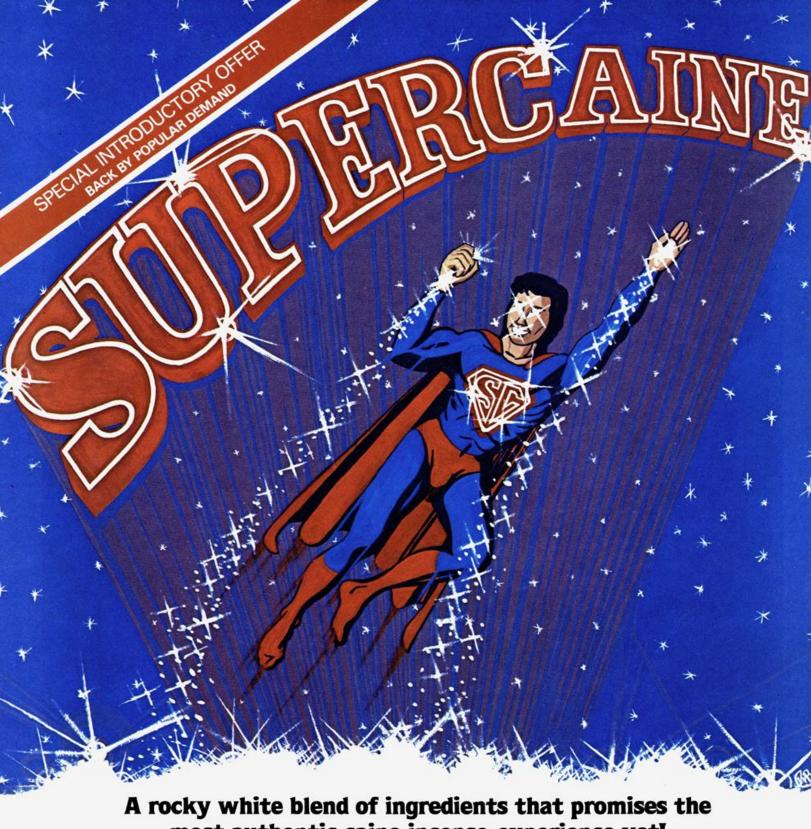
It was astonishing. Everyone just then was rubbing their jaws, spitting discreetly into styrofoam cups, waiting for the inositol numbness produced by Ultra-Caine and Pro Crystal to go away. The instant and drastic freeze from these two incenses had hyped everyone into the expectation of a coke buzz, but the buzz hadn't kicked in at all; so there were a half dozen hyped-up and vaguely discontented people standing around with no feeling from their cheekbones to their chins, but a thoroughly annoying exuberance of bubbly mucus and saliva. That's when the lettuce opium went around, and by heaven it cooled everyone out, in a certain small but special way.

Lettucene or Artificial Hashish are the brand names: Turnera diffusa and damiana, say the contents. They come, just like opium, in plastic-wrapped wads about the size of Dentyne sticks, a brown-russet gooey tar, smelling vaguely of prunes. And they seem to do something, against any reasonable person's better judgment.

The theory behind psychedelic lettuce— Turnera diffusa-is strictly speculative, understand. When lettuce is baked in a certain way, supposedly some of its stray molecules are converted into a "conformational resemblance" to morphine. Now, there are a

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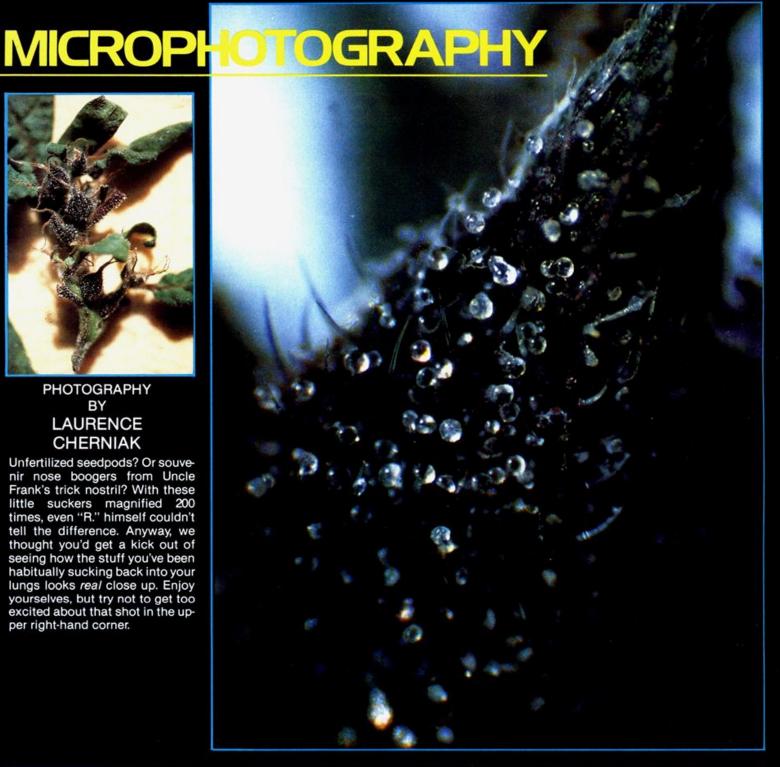


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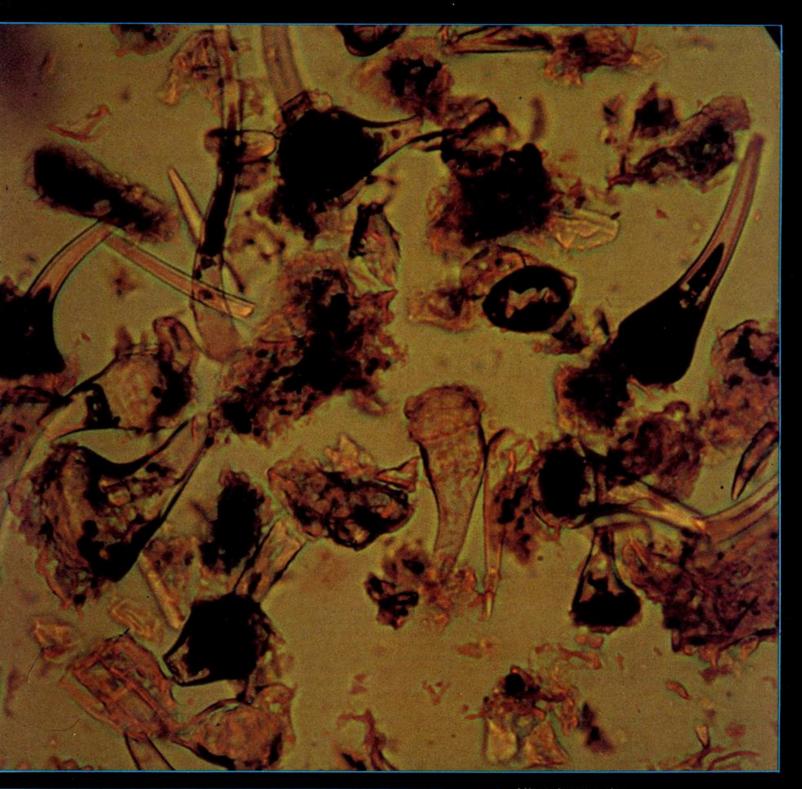
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAURENCE **CHERNIAK**

Unfertilized seedpods? Or souvenir nose boogers from Uncle Frank's trick nostril? With these Frank's trick nostril? With these little suckers magnified 200 times, even "R." himself couldn't tell the difference. Anyway, we thought you'd get a kick out of seeing how the stuff you've been habitually sucking back into your lungs looks real close up. Enjoy yourselves but the not to get too. yourselves, but try not to get too excited about that shot in the upper right-hand corner.











Microphotography __

This page: Left, crude basic particles of marijuana (actual size); above, the same, magnified $100\times$.

Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Afghani unfertilized seedpods, or calyxes (actual size); a single seedpod showing glandular and nonglandular trichomes (20 ×); close-up of royal Nepalese hashish pulverized (40 ×); enlarged sample of royal Nepalese hashish. (16 ×).

PLATO'S RETREATISTS

THE SORDID WORLD OF THE COMPUTER ADDICT

BY P. GREGORY SPRINGER

ORANGE DOTS BECKON. They welcome with temptation, power and promise. All 262,000 of them reach out with their unearthly glow.

WELCOME TO PLATO. TYPE YOUR PLATO NAME. TYPE THE NAME OF YOUR PLATO GROUP. TYPE YOUR PASSWORD, THEN PRESS NEXT.

A snag surfaces. My personal password, known in all the world but to me alone, doesn't enter properly.

WRONG PASSWORD

The friendliness retreats; PLATO is no easy bride. It wants to wrangle. I correct my password to connect with the Gargantua known as PLATO.

CHOOSE A LESSON, HELP AVAILABLE.

Once upon a time PLATO stood for "programmed logic for automated teaching operations," but it's a forgotten, obsolete phrase. Today PLATO is an international communications network with 1,500 terminals on five continents. In 1960 only one terminal existed at the Computer-based Education Research Laboratory (CERL) at the University of Illinois.

The lesson I choose is addict, for Addicts Anonymous, one of the hundreds of notesfiles for intercommunication among PLA-TO users. Addicts Anonymous deals with the acknowledged side effect of all forms of computer use: fanatical habituation. The experts recognize it and worry. Educators try to overlook the ramifications of their possible successor.

The problem isn't taken lightly. The word *addict* is applied succinctly to describe the phenomenon.

Psychology Today drew media attention to the issue with the publication of "The Hacker Papers," a dialogue among habitual users. And Joseph Weizenbaum, professor of computer science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, documented it in Computer Power and Human Reason, a book not liked but often quoted by the people he wrote about. Weizenbaum observed:

Wherever computer centers have become established,...bright young men of disheveled appearance, often with sunken glowing eyes, can be seen sitting at computer consoles, their arms tensed and waiting to fire their fingers...at the buttons and keys on which their attention seems to be as riveted as a gambler's on the rolling dice. When not so transfixed, they often sit at tables strewn with computer printouts over which they pore like possessed students of a cabalistic text. They work until they nearly drop, twenty, thirty hours at a time. Their food, if they arrange it, is brought to them: coffee, Cokes, sandwiches. If possible, they sleep on cots near the computer. But only for a few hoursthen back to the console or the printouts... They are oblivious to their bodies and to the world in which they move. They exist, at least when so engaged, only through and for the computers. These are computer bums, compulsive programmers. They are an international phenomenon.1

= addict =

8/18/81 9:30 pm j grunau/champana I go nine months every year without PLA-TO and I go a week or two at least not

¹From Computer Power and Human Reason: From Judgment to Calculation by Joseph Weizenbaum. W.H. Freeman and Company. Copyright © 1976. signing on when I get back. Of course, when I do get on . . . blooie . . . End of sanity. End to sense of proportion. End to perspective on what is important in life. When I first got on in 1975, I used to lay awake at night thinking, gee, I can't wait until I get on tomorrow, and getting an author signon was the greatest ambition I had.

"It's not an American disorder," attests Weizenbaum. In his thick German accent, he matter-of-factly admits his field is populated with fanatics all over the world. "I just returned from two years in Europe and the same problem exists there as here. At the student center at MIT, a room is set aside for electronic games. It is always crowded. You'd think they'd get satiated, but they are there, playing games after playing all day on the computer."

Video games are the tip of the iceberg, housed in glittery parlors whose siren song in beeps, whistles and electronic whirrs draw in children of the future. Spaceship simulations beam them up into self-contained fantasies: boy meets machine.

Since the success of Space Invaders, the video games industry works overtime to discover a type of machine that appeals to women as well as men. Pac-Man, with more than 60,000 off the assembly line in the first few months, has gone the furthest to wrest the model customer out of the 13-to-30 male mold. Pac-Man, a gobbling yellow blob, chases (and gets chased by) multicolored furry monsters through a maze of video lines, consuming as many tiny dots as he finds along the path. Women have found him "adorable"; the computer leveling of sex appeal gets underway.

continued on following page

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= addict =

7/19/81 5:14pm alan m/summit The orange dots are more personal to me than face to face encounters with people I don't know. This may be because when you leave a note with your signon attached, it is there for a long time, much longer than a spoken word is around, and therefore tends to be more thought out. Those who say computers are impersonal have never used a computer. They are far more personal than most people. P.S. Computer games are better than sex.

Dots mean everything to the CERL Clones (self-appointed title for the hardest-core addicts). The bobbing head next to me jerks in unison with his screen's shifting glow. Side by side in cells, few acknowledge the presence of any other than their terminals. The machinery hum gets interrupted rarely by a laugh, hard and solitary, when someone talks to himself or to the dots, discovering some lone revelation.

We have orange-dot plasma panels at PLATO terminals because they are flickerfree, with high sharpness and contrast," explains Prof. Donald Bitzer, a youthful rounding fellow with flattop and rubbery grin. Bitzer, more or less, invented PLATO with his sleight of hand back in 1959 when the university said it couldn't be done. In his office, wall plaques designate awards and achievements, one indicating his membership in the National Brotherhood of Magicians Union. One of the restricted files on PLATO, called = magicnotes =, contains some of Bitzer's more arcane inventions. "We used to get complaints with the old PLATO CRT (cathode ray tube) panels, but we have years and years of people looking at the orange dots for 12 hours a day, and never had complaints. Clearly, anything that's enjoyable can be addictive.

"PLATO users aren't so addicted as not to complain. They'll complain about anything; they want more of this or less of that. They are very loyal. No matter where they go, they look for PLATO terminals. They try to get PLATO systems installed no matter where they are."

=addict =

7/15/81 6:14pm Test 2/ee Help! I'm graduating this year, and I'm unprepared to face the real world. What's it like out there? Is there any way to avoid this?

7/15/81 7:12pm wazzoo/cepdl Here's one possible solution. Get a fulltime job at the University. In that way, you can still manage to get a PLATO signon. That's how I'm still on this wonderful system.

Bitzer sits back in his office chair, tossing his feet up on a nearby desk. "One of the things I did was to control access to some extent with the signons. It's hardly secure because people pass signons on to each other, which is forbidden—but we've been very lenient on enforcement," he continues. "But we sell space on PLATO. Cheap. For six dollars a part, consisting of seven to eight blocks, each block 360 bit words of 200 bytes, so you get 21,000 bytes and you own it. Forever. There are a lot of other ways, less beneficial and more hazardous with no redeeming value, to spend your time than being addicted on the computer.

"It took me a while to realize that I was an addict, but when my wife left and I began flunking out of medical school, I realized something was not right."

"I've looked for evidence that PLATO users have less interest in drugs and drink and fast cars. I have no evidence that the population downstairs in CERL differs at all from the population outside, but I'd like to think that the computer works against bad habits."

= drugnotes =

7/2/81 11:32pm anonymous Black capsules with white words on each half: DEX

What is it? Is it real or phony?

7/4/81 10:15am raider/cs400 It is rather hard to tell. I have had the real thing which fits your description, and also a fake which was mostly caffeine.

7/4/81 12:46pm anonymous Well, what is the real thing, and how is it possible to tell the difference?

7/4/81 1:10pm marsha/pps Probably Dexedrine, of course.

"There are 20 PLATO systems right now, and 200 sites around the world work with this PLATO system alone," Bitzer continued. "We think we can put PLATO on cable TV very soon, for home use."

The PLATO system is made up of not one but two computers—a CDC Cyber 73-24 and a CDC 6500. A disc system stores programs and lessons with the Extended Core Storage (ECS) and the Auxiliary Memory System with a combined capacity of 7 million words. Data swapped in and out of the

central memory transfers at the rate of 10 million 60-bit words per second. Instructional material is programmed in TUTOR, a simplified—yet sophisticated—computer language with capacity for graphics, computation, natural-language answer-judging capability, and other tools geared to teaching. Notesfiles and games came along as use of PLATO increased.

PLATO came into being in Urbana, the Illinois town where HAL in 2001: A Space Odyssey claimed to have been born. According to Bitzer, his baby is the only successful teaching computer in the world. Apart from the hundreds of lessons, programs and data storage files on PLATO, there is a multipurpose file catalog of computer games, notesfiles, gossip, and even pornography, although the latter and some other files aren't officially recognized by the university or the state. The classrooms and buildings that house terminals fill up late at night and space wars of empire or avatar are conducted ritually, players joining in to participate from many corners.

= empirenotes =

7/18/81 7:49pm romular/player ah . . . the birth of a great signon . . .

7/19/81 12:01am ganda/ccr hyper torp torp hyper phaser torp torp the death of yet another romular

My signon, unimaginatively picked "springer," gets granted for temporary stay, allowing me access to most files. A woman director at CERL leads me to the terminals.

PRESS NEXT TO BEGIN appears on each terminal in an empty row of screens.

I am on, sp.ri.n.g.e.r., group v.i.s.a.u.t.h. (for visiting authority), password m.i.t.c.h. (no particular reason). "springer/visauth" enters the system, to calculate probabilities in medical statistics, to draw graphics and write novels, to talk through notesfiles to the faceless society, those invisible masses of hackers known only to me as phil/polysci and 12" cock/player and sonya/sweden.

"We on this file..." begins one introductory communique from julie/chi to springer/ visauth. I'm the new kid on the block, and in no uncertain terms my rules for admission are spelled out. There may be honor among thieves, but there are routines and subroutines for hackers.

"I hope you have a strong stomach," the CERL director warned as she walked down the fluorescent corridor, back to her terminal.

THEY CALL THEM HACKERS.

"Hackers, the term? I'm not sure. I really don't know where it came from," Dr. Weizenbaum said, pausing a moment from his busy schedule at MIT. "I speculate that it refers to the business of writing, a newspaper term for doing something of not high quality."

But can't hackers, the most addicted of

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computer addicts, turn out some remarkable programs in their obsession to the task?

"Yes, of course, but how is quality defined? Is the hacker's program maintainable? Is it well documented?" Weizenbaum noted the latest twist in hacker culture: "Here at MIT and other high computer cultures, when some program turns out particularly well, a common phrase used is 'That's a good hack', so it has been given this positive connotation."

= addict =

7/11/81 10:15am springer/visauth Are you a computer addict? What are the sensations you feel? How has it affected your life?

7/12/81 2:13am anonymous I am one. I cannot stay away from a computer terminal for more than a day. I notice now that most of my friends are computer majors or working with computers. I can spend literally hours sitting down and programming.

7/13/81 11:05pm hartsell/oumed Yes, I am a hacker. They say admitting it is the first step toward recovery. It took me a while to realize that I was indeed an addict, but when my wife left and I began flunking out of medical school, I realized something was not right.

7/19/81 8:14pm conan/ee
Try to cure me!

7/19/81 8:16pm anonymous True addiction is continuing to press keys when PLATO is down and wondering why nothing is happening.

7/19/81 8:25pm peter/vo A true PLATO addict would probably know what caused the crash. He becomes a systems programmer so he may have caused it himself, and he has something to do while it's down.

7/19/81 10:01pm kulas/ee

7/19/81 10:04pm hermit/ccwc Perhaps we should go on strike for better conditions. Not use PLATO for a week. Or, at most, only five hours a day.

7/19/81 10:15pm conan/ee Up your ass!

7/19/81 10:20pm hermit/ccwc Sex is one possible substitute for PLATO. Does anyone out there know how it works?

7/19/81 10:48am conan/ee See the =rocks = file.

7/20/81 4:48am kulas/ee Enough said.

"How are we to understand this compulsion?" Weizenbaum asked in Computer Power and Human Reason. "We must first recognize that it is a compulsion. Normally, wishes for satisfaction lead to behaviors that have a texture of discrimination and spontaneity. The fulfillment of such wishes leads to pleasure. The compulsive programmer is driven; there is little spontaneity in how he behaves; he finds no pleasure in the fulfillment of his nominal wishes. He seeks reassurance from the computer, not pleasure."

New personalities emerge and take over. Raush/bchem, capron/wright, dennis/catm, god/fhs and the rest become beings with their own methods of communication, atti-

"Weak-willed people, people with unstable social lives, people in formative stages of their lives, should not become involved in computer science."

tudes, characteristics and recognizable traits. Fame and notoriety on the system follow the best of signons, who can remain faceless in their glory. The language of hackers has no etymological basis understood to linguistics. In real life, computer hackers sometimes find it difficult to make ordinary sounds emerge in proper sequence. Abbreviations, puns, stuttering and indecipherable codes make up an accepted speech habit.

The computer is a modifier of personalities. It is highly addictive," wrote G. Gandalf, the signon used in the Low Overhead Time Sharing (LOTS) computer system of a contributor to "The Hacker Papers." "I was one of the top ten among several thousand LOTS users last spring for the amount of time I spent here. I have watched people close to me undergo the transformation I am so involved in piecing my personality and social life back together that I think I have learned very little about how to prevent this from happening in the first place.... Weak-willed people, people with unstable social lives, people in formative stages of their lives, should not become involved in computer science. It should be left until they are truly able to make decisions and be aware of all the consequences."2

= ipr =
7/22/81 2:21pm anonymous
Orange dots are just another level of per-

²Reprinted from *Psychology Today* Magazine. Copyright ©1980 Ziff-Davis Publishing Company.

sonality that you have to plow through to get to the real person inside.

"I'd rather not be associated with PLAY-TOY," claimed Mike Stute, a 21-year-old former CERL Clone. He punctuated his speech with inventive exclamations, like "twango" and "rrrit," while giving PLATO a new slang moniker. "It should be in the graveyard. It's 15 years old, at least. It's incredibly slow. The bureaucracy which goes on the system sends power to the heads of the software maintenance people. They play God. There are Platogates. Someone with a marital problem got into the notesfiles communications system, overrode the anonymous option, and read what people were saying about his wife. He was reprimanded. Another was caught code stealing, going to great lengths to steal games. Since grades are scored on the same files, he could have fixed friends' grades, too. I first got into PLATO about 1976, before microcomputers really got in. I since got my own IMSAI and [taught] myself. Besides, PLATO people are scummy. My friend calls them social rejects. Weekends, they play games instead of going out. I broke away."

Arrogance grows in the select society, while a reassuring machine builds pride in the shared secrets, rewarding the most fragile of egos.

On TERM-talk, a feature of direct correspondence that other systems have copied from PLATO, one is able to communicate with any other signon. Each user gets a line of type, with the ability to simultaneously spew out discourse on weather, gossip, insults, games, whatever, while working, eating, or otherwise lounging at the terminal. TERM-talk is an advanced, isolated form of intercourse. Unlike the telephone, only words are conveyed, not inflection or tone. It is the least committed form of intercommunication yet developed.

= addict =
7/19/81 6:50pm anonymous
You know you are a true addict when you use TERM-talk to talk with the guy sitting at the next terminal.

Two other users of the LOTS system at Stanford defended their habits in the *Psychology Today* article. K. Kuddles typed onto the system:

I don't want to turn this into a personal defense or anything, but as I've said before, people have always found me strange. I have always worn my hair long because I felt it was comfortable for me. I prefer clothes that are comfortable and perhaps a bit scroungy... I spent time in an ad agency where people were not only truncated and anesthetized, but positively deformed in personality. They viewed people as real, honest-to-goodness objects of \$\$ and/or pieces of meat. They'd promise you anything, but split with your portfolio.

Working with computers has been the only

thing tolerable I've done in quite a while. It does have its drawbacks.... People get angry because someone sends them a message asking them what they are up to, and the other person gets all freaked-out and sends nasty notes back.

The problem is that the social structure of LOTS rewards people who hack well but don't interface well with people.

E. Ernest wrote a similar call to arms. "Do you intend to stand idly by while mealy-mouthed, bleeding-heart, fuzzy-studies majors shred you? Surely not! Voice your opinion! Stand up for your right to enjoy not enough sleep, not enough terminals, and not enough core! What people do with consenting computers in private is their business!"

= addict =

7/20/81 7:44pm alan m/summit Dear Sir: Being a computer addict, one should see that the computer offers an alternate reality, one that is directly shaped by the user. Through judicious effort, the user can become anyone or anything that he/she desires. The rewards are directly related to effort. If you work a lot, you tend to accumulate worthwhile stuff, intangibles like ability to perform well at games, or tangibles like programs. Regardless of what the public thinks, it is much easier to deal with computers than with real people. The computer is predictable. It is under your control. One thing about PLATO is its high level of intellectual capability. PLATO people, in my opinion, are much more intelligent than non-PLA-TO people on the average. I like people who think, and there are not many of them out there. There are ties that bind all of us users together, namely the system itself. Where else can you find such community spirit? You are just the new kid on

New kid on the block. After a week, I am still prying into files, discovering how to access the restricted rocks file, playing with anim (animated cartoons, nudes, moving pictures stored for endless repetitions, like a speedy Etch-a-Sketch), ipr (interpersonal relationships), pnotes (personal notes), platosoc (social aspects of PLATO), doodling with borders and snide comments, sharing notes and experiences and secrets with people I will never see.

Immediate anesthesia sets in before the orange dots. Little else matters as the illusion of productivity keeps one from experiencing guilt at the hours that pass easily by. My time on the system accumulates. My hours per day grow. When away from the terminal, I plan and plot future messages, trivia quizzes, last words and comebacks to other battlefields.

Inside CERL, the trappings of dim light and stale electric-charged air melt away when the terminal speaks to me. Silence sets in, or maybe my thoughts drown sound out. The joy of reading, that lost art, returns like a preschool discovery, as the machine delivers new codes and stories for my personal satisfaction. I communicate freely; it's like getting the mail, delivering a United Nations address without fear, being rewarded for creativity with response. Negative feedback, mean-spirited graffiti, or improper programming are overcome by

"How's your love life?
Maybe all it needs is a little
Interlude. Interlude is the
most stimulating computer
game ever conceived."

persistent hours at the machine, getting in a last word, a new program attempt, the next intergalactic battle.

"If you could replace a world of pure logic with the one we have of emotion, would it be worth it?" comes the question on the interpersonal relations file. Many reply yes, aligning themselves with Mr. Spock. The question is viewed as routine on the hacker circuit.

My own question, "What do you feel while working on PLATO?" is rejected, kidded, a meaningless bit of stupid introspection during the ongoing high. Who wants to measure the pleasure in the midst of the trip?

= corans =

7/20/81 10:45am springer/visauth Anyone here able to tell me how to draw those little moving pictures in = anim =? Also, what are some of the easier games to learn?

7/20/81 11:02am phil/polysci He's hooked.

7/20/81 2:46pm judith/mfl Clearly, you didn't read the lab notes for this file. Check = bigjump = and = notesfile = for more information. Sheesh.

Computer addiction is the struggle for omnipotence. The machines offer an alternative, simulating sensations unavailable in the real world. Although programmers are most likely to become hopeless hackers (starting young, broken in by games and clever learning programs), pure games players and notesfile freaks also develop obsessions. The instant graffiti of notesfiles fascinates me. There is no graffiti in the restrooms at CERL. Everything goes on system. Getting the last word in is a regular game in the notes, so that some strings of responses stretch out into hundreds of comments, leading far from the intent of the original note. Hacking out a personal program can go in that same meandering direction, getting more complicated and convoluted-sometimes into indecipherable languages-as they go along, becoming an arcane prescription for a hacker in search of the big A-Ha, an orgasm substitute in artificial intelligence.

Computers get introduced first as toys. It talks back to you, with intelligence but no vulnerable fallibilities. You can't be rude to a machine. It gives you time to react. You can always pull the plug. Press reset. Press next to begin again.

= platosoc =

7/21/81 4:30pm annie/microbio Come on, open your eyes . . . On one side you have the nerds and on the other you have the freaks and there is nothing in between and what's even more fantastic about it is that they cohabitate together and work together without too much tension. Have you ever seen a situation like that anywhere else?

= gaynotes =

7/23/81 5:55pm sagittarius/berk I did TERM-talk with my lover for two years before we even met. Now, we've been living together for over eight months. Most of the people I slept with in my life, I met working on PLATO.

"How's your love life? A little dull around the edges? Routine? Predictable? Boring? Maybe all it needs is a little Interlude. Interlude is the most stimulating computer game ever conceived," the ad copy for a home interview game with more than 100 Interludes goes. "Interlude #7, The Chase; Interlude #82, Caveman Caper; and when you learn the secret of Interlude #99, your love life may never be the same again!"

=rocks=

7/20/81 11:15pm anonymous Tell me your name. I always see you in 165. You are so fucking gorgeous I just see you and want to bang you on the floor. Your ass always looks so tight those shorts drive me wild. What the fuck is your name? Let me eat you over and over and over.

7/21/81 12:31pm anon Describe the person you want to fuck. I bet I know her.

7/22/81 5:33pm anonymous What her? He's describing the fat guy that continued on page 92

JANUARY 82

Mushrooms





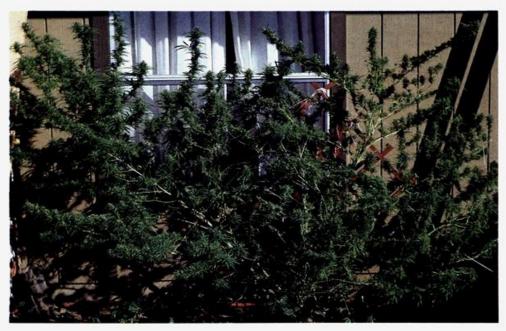
GROW AMERICAN

I'll Never Buy Again Again

by the Italian Grower







ALIFORNIA MARIJUANA is now recognized as being some of the best smoke in the world. Consequently, it has also become some of the most expensive. For this reason I decided to stop handing over exorbitant sums of money each month to some pencil-necked geek in turquoise jewelry and imported dungarees and tried growing some of this superweed myself.

First off, I had to find the right seed, a seed with an impeccable pedigree that was well suited to the climate in which I live. The seed I chose had a long history in California dating back to the early '70s. It was a crossbreed of Mexican sativa, Afghani and *indica* and had produced some of the best dope I had ever smoked. This particular cross was also known to be capable of producing plants yielding more than one and a half pounds of pure female buds. Yipes!!

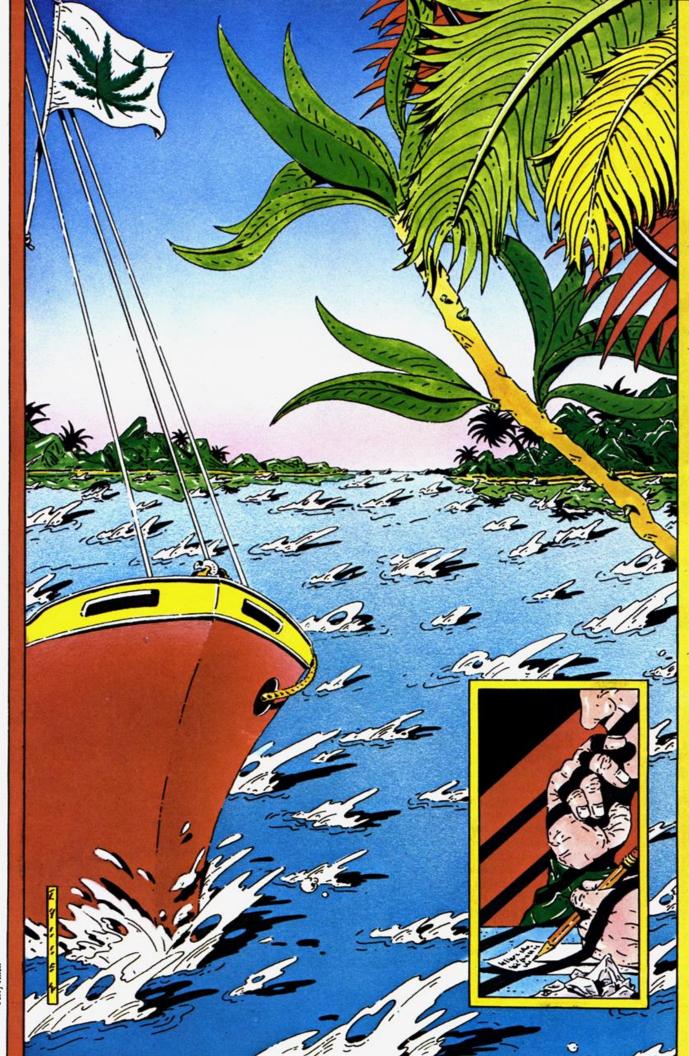
With the right seeds picked, I started to



In addition to the specially treated soil and the continued fertilizing, pinching my plants was one of the most important things I did to increase their yield. All pinching entails is squeezing the top buds of your plants between your thumb and forefinger. This process induces the plant to grow wider and bushier, as opposed to tall and skinny. I pinched the plants four times before they changed cycles and came up with some specimens that were 13 feet high and 4 feet wide.

When the plants started budding I pulled out all the males and slowed down my watering to once every eight days, adding 0-10-10 Superbloom to the water (I used double the amount recommended on the label). To further insure harvesting a potent crop, while the plant was budding I made sure to pull off every leaf that showed signs of dying (the reason being that the energy a plant needs to restore a damaged leaf is totally wasted; better to direct that energy toward the production of a fuller, stonier bud).

Though harvesting didn't come until December, it was well worth the wait. The stuff was even better than I'd hoped for. After selling most of it (at \$200 an ounce) I dumped a load of money in the bank and took my wife to Mexico for a vacation. In a few short months I'd gone from (nickel) bags to riches. Viva California, viva laissez-faire. I'll never buy marijuana again.



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THE STORY SO FAR: In March 1978, for the first and only time in his life, Colombian shrimper Pedro Vera signed up for a marimba run to the United States. The ship was an ancient North Sea freighter, the Helena Star, skippered by Vera's old friend, Román, also on his first (and last) such voyage. Under vague but incontrovertible orders over shortwave, they were guided through the Panama Canal to Colombia's Pacific coast; and in the mouth of a jungle river there, a fast-talking, foul-mouthed, towheaded central Colombian named Jacinto met them with a whole armada of canvas-bearing bales of "la hija de puta maracachafa." And they took off north, told to "head for Canada," bearing over 40 tons of Colombian gold.

THE STORY TO COME: Pedro Vera had nearly two years to write it all down, in a U.S. federal jail with Captain Román (the rest of the crew being merely deported). The Helena bust was the biggest single grass tonnage that would ever be seized off Puget Sound: nearly 38 tons of weed. And what happened to the other two to five tons? They were offloaded onto the Joli, a champion racing yacht, skippered by playboy ski star Mike Lund. It seems Lund set up the deal with two amateur investors from Seattle and ordered up eight times more marimba than he had any honest intention of offloading. Then when he'd taken off enough on the Joli to retire for life, he anonymously told the DEA where she was and how much she had on board—knowing that the U.S. authorities would be too busy making a two-week publicity binge over this enormous bust to bother him, while he parceled out his own grass, collected his millions and absconded abroad forever. He also left thoughtful "clues" aboard the Joli, leading to the much-publicized apprehension of his unhappy coinvestors, who are both now doing federal time themselves.

PEDRO VERA

Translated by Sandra Jacoste Frady

Pedro Vera himself is safely back in marimbaland now, along with Román, so the story can be told. People up and down the West Coast who fondly recall the Helena's tasty weed may someday enjoy don Pedro's whole book-length autobiographical story. T FIRST THE COLD WAS STIMUlating. After the dank atmosphere of humidity off the sultry California coast, the cold seemed refreshing and it prompted us to pleasant activity. Personally, I have known cold in the highlands of Colombia, where the Andean peaks are forever snow-laden; but of course, that was with adequate

of the warmth of a heated room.

Now, though, our defense was poor. Our group of sons of the warm tropics defended themselves with the scarce resources we had at hand. Román and I took turns wearing the large fur-lined jacket while we stood our watches on the bridge. Bocachico fashioned for himself a poncho with two blankets, and continued on next page

protection and the pleasant accessibility

over his work clothes he wore rubber coveralls.

ROMAN WAS THE FIRST TO SPOT IT AND HE HANDED ME the glasses as he pointed to it.

"Parece que ya está ahí. That must be it."

I nudged Román on one arm and motioned that I wanted to speak to him privately. We pulled off to the radio room.

"You knew a sailboat would be coming?"

"St. They told me it was a blue yacht; a racing yacht, very swift; and they said it was one of the very largest kinds. The advantage is that around here it does not attract attention. There are hundreds of sailboats in this area."

"But that must hold very little! How many trips will it have to make?"

"We'll find that out when it gets here. They said it's a ninetyfooter. If they took everything out of it and all that comes is the hull, it might carry a good amount. Let's wait till it approaches. I don't like it either, but..."

I understood.

The sleek little sailboat bore toward us on a light northeasterly breeze which brought it rapidly. Very rapidly, for a sailing vessel; but not rapidly enough for our needs.

About twenty minutes later it was on our latitude, about a quarter of a mile away, off starboard. In other circumstances, I would have called it a beautiful vessel. Of very fine lines, elegant and graceful, it was a priceless instrument for running with the wind. It was painted a brilliant, almost electric blue. Someone had put love into the construction of this luxurious, slender boat.

The sail was let go cleanly and rapidly, which showed that those who were manning that sailboat were not beginners. Then the yacht turned sharply toward us, using the auxiliary motor. It drew near and sailed by our side.

On the bow, small and elegant, it sported the French-reminiscent name *Joli*. And she truly fit the adjective, although I was cursing the person who came up with the bright idea of using her for this odious and complicated purpose.

Fernando, right near me, exclaimed, "She's beautiful!"

"Si," I said, "beautiful! But I would have preferred a filthy lighter that could handle all the weed in the hold."

Román on the flying bridge was signaling to them to use the radio. Just two crewmen, in yellow rain gear, were aboard. One of them entered the yacht's cabin, and a few moments later I was startled by the voice that resounded throughout the helmroom: "Helena...Helena?...Joli. Over!"

I jumped to the radio and lowered the volume. Román answered them and they asked to change channels.

The captain acquiesced and on the other frequency they carried on a conversation in English that was too rapid for me.

"Don't lose sight of the yacht. Follow it at a distance. We're going to look for calmer waters." He signaled me to follow him. "Let's go look at the chart. I think we can do it by Vancouver."

The marine chart covered the southern part of Vancouver Island, the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the coast of Washington State. Román was following a line parallel to the Vancouver coast, pointing with his finger to places I thought were perilously close to land.

"¿Qué pasa? What's happening?" I asked. "Didn't they want to take the load here?"

"He says the water is too rough for the yacht, that he knows a very safe place where the waters are calm. Vamos a ver. We'll see. We'll run with them, closer to the coast. I imagine that por aquí...about here..."

Román was tense, but he concealed it well. Still, it was evident that he himself was not delighted by this new twist.

The situation was not pleasant. We were entering Canadian waters, near the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, too close to the coast. Traffic had to be quite extensive in that zone; and, therefore, there must also be maritime security worthy of respect. Following the sailboat's course, we were going to enter the natural route of ships leaving or entering the strait: the worst place, for our business, in any sector.

My reflections were not too optimistic, and when Román approached, I was not precisely enthusiastic about the future.

"Is there much traffic in this zone?"

"There must be quite a bit. Freighters come and go from Canadian and Washington ports on routes to Japan and Alaska. Tonight when we unload, I will talk to the yacht's skipper. These people will just have to find another boat capable of taking the whole load. They've got to find one, and when they have it ready, we will rendezvous again to make the drop. But all at once! While they're rounding up a boat, which should take two or three days, we can sail slowly southward and return just in time for the rendezvous."

"¡Capitán! ¡Una luz!A light can be seen from all over the bow!" It was a very dark night. The Joli was sailing about a hundred meters ahead and starboard. The light Condorito saw, which was pointing out to us, was evidently a beacon. According to the ocean chart, it marked a channel between some islands southeast of Vancouver Island. I calculated we must be less than two miles from the coast, and, unless we were going to unload in some hidden cove, I reckoned we had gone entirely far enough to "look for calmer waters." Too far for my comfort.

I had the question on the tip of my tongue, and let it slip: "Are we going to unload around here?"

"Todavía no. Más adelante."

"Farther ahead?! Where are we going, to Chicago?!" I exploded. "In a little over two hours we will almost be at the mouth of that strait or channel or whatever the devil that is! Do you think it's prudent to offload marijuana around there?"

"What is 'prudent' and marijuana smuggling do not go together!... Of course it is not *prudente*. But we are already at the ball and we have to dance!"

He motioned me to the helmroom.

"Because you are so curious, my friend, here—here is where we unload." His index finger, long and bony, pointed to a spot on the map almost in the very middle of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, in full view of the population centers of Washington State, and the Canadian city of Victoria, on Vancouver Island.

"Pero... But... That's in the wolf's jaws!" I exclaimed, aghast. "Eso... That is within spitting distance of the towns!"

"Si...casi. Yes...almost," he replied softly.



E WERE NOW ENTERING THE waters of the seaport channel, the normal entry and departure route for several cities, without clearance, without the knowledge of the port authorities, without proper manifest or documentation, without plausible pretext—but with a load of marijuana capable of blasting into orbit each and every one of the unsuspecting inhabi-

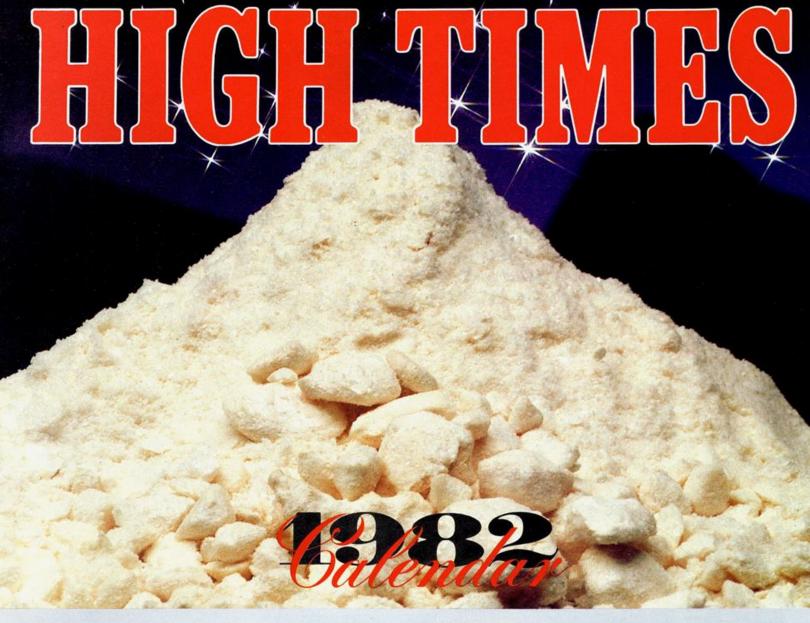
tants of the whole region! All we needed was to attract the attention of some lucky official, or for some radar operator to think that we were in trouble, any insignificant (and possible!) detail, for this channel to become a pressure cooker of narcotics agents with spotlights, sirens and guns of all calibers.

Our navigating was pitifully simple: Follow the Joli. And the yacht seemed to have no intention of stopping; she kept leading us deeper and deeper into that oversized rattrap. The Strait of Juan de Fuca is a long arm that penetrates the state of Washington from the Pacific going east-southeast. With an average breadth greater than ten miles, it is a perfect natural causeway for several cities of both nations.

Emilio entered the cabin, quite obviously worried, but bent on performing his role.

"Did you send for me, Capitán?"

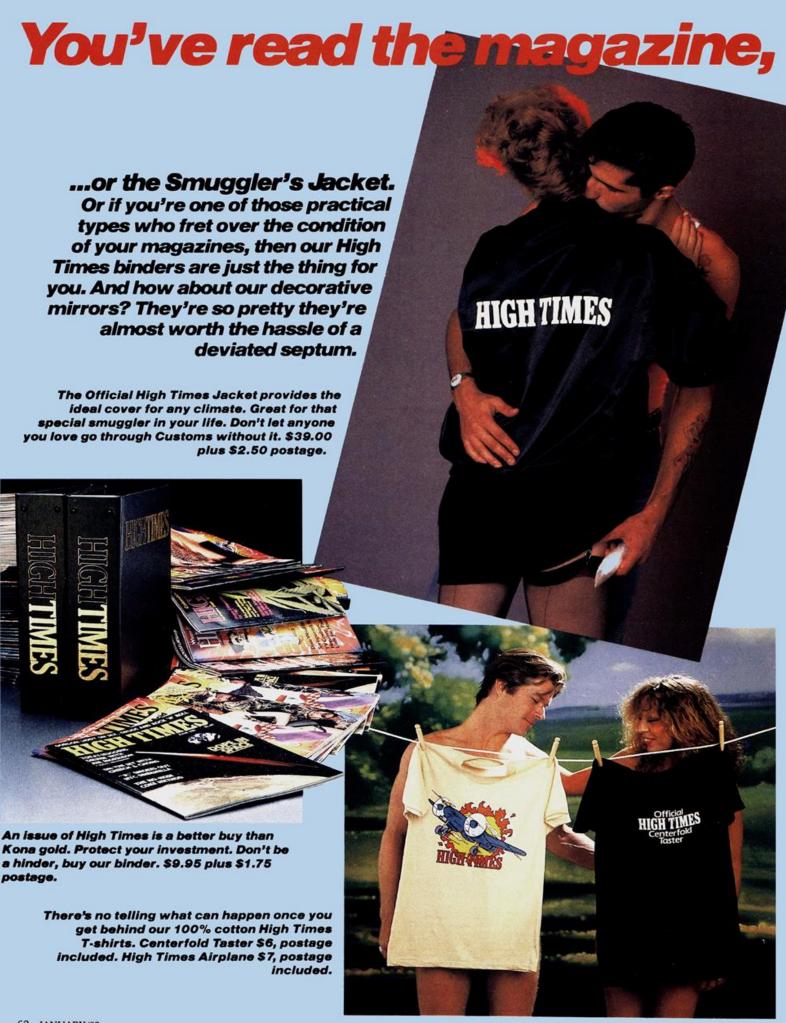
"Sf. We are walking on eggs, so pay attention and see to it that everything is done the way I tell you: The yacht will stop any second now. It'll draw up to us starboard. Moor it very firmly. Remember that if something happens, which I don't anticipate it will, there will be no chance to get continued on page 72



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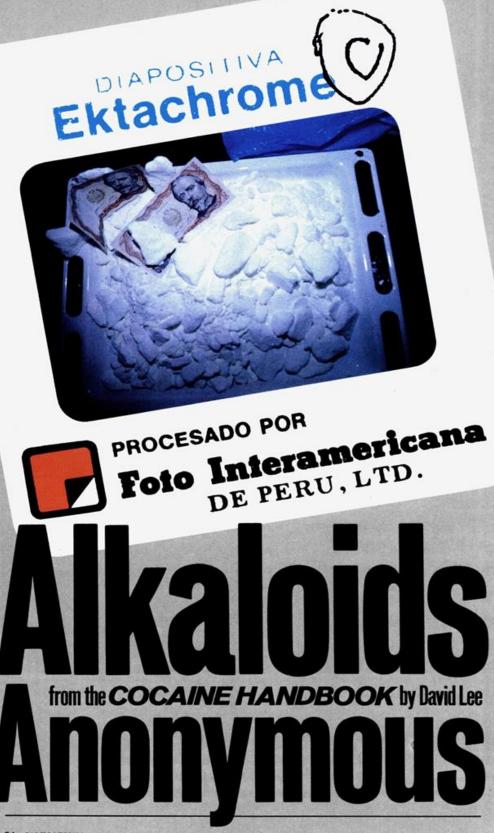
now wear the T-shirt....



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They were crystallizing several kilos and discovered they didn't have a big enough container. I was sent out to get it and came back with a large plastic garbage can. They got to work and I got laid back. Screams drew me to the laboratory where the South American chef had his foot in the can trying to plug the hole; the ether ate through the plastic and his assistant was scooping up the flood off the rug back into the trash can. We had to hold back the owner of the house as we cut up the rug, but the chef managed to recover 90 percent of the coke. —Manuel the Mule



COCAINE is only one of the alkaloids contained in the leaves of the plant species *Erythroxylon coca*. Varying amounts of several other similar alkaloids are also present, depending on the particular species of coca used, where it is grown, and the manner by which it is refined.

Most uncut illicit cocaine consists primarily of three or four alkaloids; these include: cocaine, cocamine (truxillines), cinnamylcocaine and the hygrines. In addition, benzoylecgonine is found in minute quantities or in larger amounts when the cocaine has decomposed. Tropacocaine is rarely present in South American coca but does occur significantly in Java coca.

Besides the alkaloids that occur naturally in coca, mixed alkaloid cocaine often contains *ecgonine*. As with benzoylecgonine, ecgonine is produced when the cocaine has decomposed. This can happen intentionally but is usually caused by attempting to force a higher yield from the leaves, paste or base.

Licit pharmaceutical cocaine, used in medicine as a local anesthetic, is manufactured legally under optimum laboratory conditions. In this process all alkaloids that can be converted to cocaine are used. This includes three alkaloids that have ecgonine at the core of their molecule: cocaine (methyl benzoylecgonine), cinnamylcocaine (methyl cinnamylecgonine), and cocaine (methyl truxilloylecgonine). The molecules are split into their main parts, the ecgonine portion saved, and the rest eliminated. Once isolated, the ecgonine may be synthetically converted to cocaine (methyl benzoylecgonine).

The advantage of this process is a higher yield of cocaine from coca containing predominately cocamine or cinnamylcocaine. The disadvantage of the process is that it is technically demanding and requires exacting technique, special chemicals and sophisticated laboratory equipment.

The ecgonine conversion process has been used by chemists since 1885 but is virtually unknown to the "cooks" of South America who make most of the illicit cocaine. Prior to its discovery, cocaine was refined in much the same way that is used by illicit manufacturers today. While both techniques begin with the extraction of all alkaloids, the illicit process (when properly conducted) seeks to eliminate all alkaloids but cocaine. The pharmaceutical process eliminates only those alkaloids that cannot be made into cocaine.

COCAINE CONFIDENTIAL

To date, some 14 alkaloids have been isolated from varieties of the plant. Pharmacologists have burdened us with the notion that drug plants must owe their properties to a single "active principle" that can be isolated, synthesized, studied, and administered in pure form. This notion may be helpful to pharmacologists in making their experiments simpler, but it is disastrous to the rest of us because it leads us away from natural green medicines in the direction of white powders with far higher potentials for abuse. -Andrew Weil

It should be pointed out that only the ecgonine process will totally eliminate the related alkaloids so that the only alkaloid at the end is cocaine. The illicit process will always leave traces of the other alkaloids. Whereas pharmaceutical cocaine hydrochloride will be 89.27 percent cocaine base by weight, illicit mixed-alkaloid cocaine hydrochloride will rarely be more than 80 percent cocaine base. When the illicit process is used on species of coca that have high concentrations of other alkaloids, the amount of cocaine base may drop to 50 percent or lower.

When discussing the illicit process, it is important to consider the conditions under which it is performed. The illicit processor rarely has access to the wide range of quality chemicals available in the United States and Europe. The process is carried out by "cooks" who know little about chemistry and routinely use substitute solvents and chemicals, depending on what is available. (This would be impossible when using the pharmaceutical process.)

As a South American "cook" once said, "All you need to make cocaine is three buckets and two sheets." Many cooks actually use this method. The work is done in makeshift laboratories more reminiscent of kitchens, and the sheets (complete with multiple kilos) are often hung on a clothesline to dry in the sun. Time is of the essence, and one never knows when a cocaine kitchen may have to be moved at a moment's notice. Lengthy procedures are abbreviated to meet this criterion and quality is often sacrificed in the process.

There are three kinds of laboratories that deal with different parts of the procedure. The pasta lab is usually located at or near the growing area and is used to extract all the alkaloids in the form of a water-soluble paste. This crude cocaine sulfate, called pasta, is far less bulky than the leaves themselves, and the extraction procedure and laboratory requirements are simple enough to be performed by the coca growers. (It takes 100 to 150 kilos of dry leaves to produce one kilo of dry pasta.) All that is required is to soak the dried leaves in water, add a strong alkali like lime to release the alkaloids, and stir in a solvent like kerosene or gasoline, which will dissolve the alkaloids while remaining separate from the water. The water is drained out the bottom of the container and the gasoline is poured off the top. Once the gasoline has been separated, sulfuric acid is added to precipitate the alkaloids. The precipitate-the pastais separated from the gasoline by filtration

and put out in the sun to dry. (In Bolivia, where the predominant alkaloid is cocaine, hydrochloric acid is often substituted for sulfuric acid, and the resultant hydrochloride is the finished product.)

The dry pasta is usually tannish brown, the color coming from plant material, dirt, et cetera. Usually all its compounds will precipitate with lime and dissolve in gasoline. If a stronger alkali is used, more compounds will be present.

The next step of the process is to convert the pasta to base. This is usually done in a base lab located in Colombia and is a very critical part of the procedure since it determines the amount and proportions of different alkaloids that will be present in the finished product. Parts of this conversion are routinely left out due to the time involved, weight losses and potential risk to the cocaine. When properly performed, the conversion to base will eliminate cinnamylcocaine and the hygrines, as well as most organic impurities.

The conversion is properly performed by dissolving the pasta in water and adding sulfuric acid to further acidify the solution. Potassium permanganate is added to the solution, causing it to turn a violet color. This oxidation process does not appreciably affect the cocaine, but the oils and impurities

are attacked almost immediately. The critical part of the process is deciding when to stop the action of the permanganate by adding an alkali. If the decision is made too early, the resultant base will contain more impurities and other alkaloids; if the decision is made too late, some cocaine will be destroyed by the permanganate. There is hardly an experienced cook who has not overoxidized the pasta at one time or another. Never was it more true that "close only counts in horseshoes."

The owners of the pasta are not involved for the fun of it-their purpose is to make money. The loss of a quantity of cocaine due to overoxidation of the pasta is hardly an effective means of increasing the profit, so, more often than not, this part of the process is eliminated. Why take the chance when the cocaine will sell anyway?

Pasta converted to base without being oxidized with permanganate rarely results in cocaine hydrochloride which is over 60 percent cocaine base. Cocaine hydrochloride made from properly oxidized base may be as much as 82 percent cocaine base.

The last step of the process is to convert the base to "crystal," the South American term for cocaine hydrochloride. This is usually done in a crystal lab located in or near

continued on page 67

COCA ALKALOIDS

	Sensory description	Melting Point °C.	Decomposition Products
Cocaine	colorless crystals or white crystalline powder with no odor and slightly bitter taste	96-98	ecgonine methyl alcohol benzoic acid
Cocamine (Truxillines)	white amorphous powder with dirty odor and verybitter taste	80	ecgonine methyl alcohol truxillic acid
Cinnamylcocaine	coloriess needles	121	ecgonine methyl alcohol cinnamic acid
Hygrines	colorless, volatile oil with cat-urine-like odor and very bitter taste	81 (boiling point)	hygric acid
Tropacocaine	needles	49	benzoic acid & tropine
Benzoylecgonine	colorless crystals, orthorhombic prisms or needles	86–92 decomposes 195 dry	ecgonine benzoic acid
Ecgonine	crystals, monoclinic prisms	198 decomposes 205 dry	



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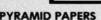
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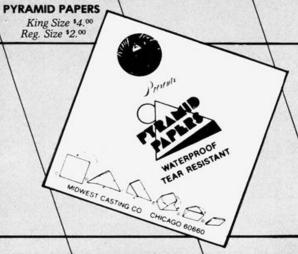


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a major city in Colombia. The base is dissolved in ether, and hydrochloric acid is added to precipitate the cocaine hydrochloride crystals. These are collected by filtration and are then dried. It is rare for this process to be performed with less than 3 kilos, and as many as 50 may be done at one time. The crystallization is performed as quickly as possible, taking as little as 15 minutes, whereas a more professional procedure might take hours.

Since most illicit cocaine is made the quick way, with the emphasis on quantity, it often contains an alkaloid proportion similar to that which existed in the leaves themselves. This is not necessarily bad, because most consumers of cocaine seem to prefer the mellower high of mixed-alkaloid cocaine to the speedy but clear high of the pharmaceutical product. One must remember that, in medicine, cocaine is used as a local anesthetic; the presence of other alkaloids makes it less effective as such. However, when the cocaine is used as a recreational drug, the same reasoning may not hold true.

Aside from cocaine, the alkaloids that are of the most interest to the consumer are cocamine and the hygrines. This is of course due to the large amount of these alkaloids present in illicit cocaine.

Cocamine was first discovered in what was then called Trujillo coca and was for many years confused with cocaine due to the remarkable similarities between the two and the difficulty in separating them. Its chemical formula is very close to that of cocaine, the main difference being the kind of acid that is produced when the molecule decomposes. Cocaine decomposes to methyl alcohol, benzoic acid, and ecgonine, while cocamine breaks down to methyl alcohol, truxillic acid, and ecgonine. This difference results in an alkaloid that is considerably less active than cocaine, with little or no anesthetic value and distinctly different psychoactive qualities. Cocamine acts on the muscular system while cocaine acts on the nervous system. Cocamine is amorphous (noncrystalline) and when present with cocaine will lessen its crystallinity and diminish its brilliance. The taste of cocamine is more bitter than cocaine, with little or no numbing effect. The effects of consuming cocaine that has a significant amount of cocamine will be more physical in nature, lacking the clarity of cocaine. It may actually seem to cause drowsiness.

The hygrines were first thought of as a decomposition product produced during the manufacture of cocaine. They are in fact a natural component of the coca leaf and may be present in quantities as great as 30 percent of the total alkaloid content. The presence of hygrine in illicit cocaine is often due to the manufacturer's desire to increase the weight of the cocaine. In order for hygrine to precipitate at the same time as cocaine, an excess of hydrochloric acid must be used. This often results in partial decomposition of the cocaine molecule. (If continued on page 74

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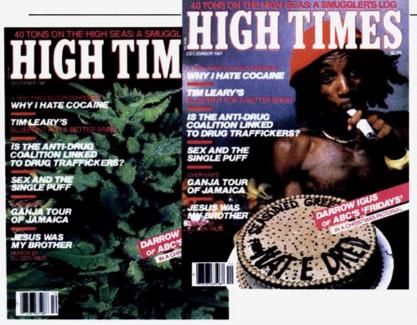
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hangs on your wall reflects your personal style as much, say, as whether you make your bed with hospital corners



PLEA

DOUBLE EXPOSURE Look closely at the HIGH TIMES cover pictured left. It looks just like the copy you picked up at the newsstand last month, doesn't it? Now look at the cover next to it. That's the copy you didn't get last month—although maybe your buddy did—and here's why.

In December we ran two different covers on the magazine. Inside, the pages were the same; only the covers were different. They call it market research. The idea was to find out how many of you would buy any magazine with a picture of Darrow "Nat E. Dred" Igus of TV's "Fridays" on the cover, and how many would be seduced by a flash of budding and nubile cannabis. What happens now is that the business types around here collect a mass of data on you guys, put it through a computer, send it up a flagpole, and scientifically determine that yup, there is a crying need for even more market research.

What all this means to you is that even if you bought HIGH TIMES last month, you'll still need one more cover to complete your collection. Which we're prepared to sell you, clever people that we are. Specify Nat E. Dred or cannabis cover, December '81, \$3 ppd. Back Issues, HIGH TIMES, 17 West 60th St., New York, NY 10023.

BETTER LATE THAN You mean you didn't buy a ticket to the three days of mud and love that came to be known as Woodstock? That's okay, because nobody else did either; which is why some 10,000 unsold tickets were discovered in a warehouse last February. Now these same tickets are once again on sale—only 12 years later—as collector's items. The three-day tickets, framed in glass, sell at face value, a bargain in view of Sotheby's hefty appraisal of their worth on the collectibles market: some \$600, say the experts. Will they hold up as a hedge against inflation? Has the Woodstock Generation embraced capitalism? Woodstock Memories, \$24 COD. Investment Galleries, 250 West 57th St., Suite 224, New York, NY 10019.





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The Widelux has a fixed-focus (this means no focusing) 26 mm, f 2.8 lens with five f-stops and three shutter speeds—equal to 1/250, 1/125 and 1/15 of a second. The film is exposed in one sweeping motion through a narrow slit behind the lens.

The fun begins with the shutter set for 1/15, the slowest speed. At this setting, the lens takes 3.5 seconds to make its circuit and expose the entire negative. Should the camera or the subject move during the exposure, the image begins to blur and distort and melt into pure shapes and color, as you see here. Color film is most effective. The blurring, swirling, trippy effects don't seem to translate well into black and white tones.

The Widelux is manufactured by the Panon Camera Company in Tokyo. The retail price is \$629.95 with case, plus \$62.95 for the filter. It is available in the United States exclusively through Olden Camera, 1265 Broadway, New York, NY 10001.

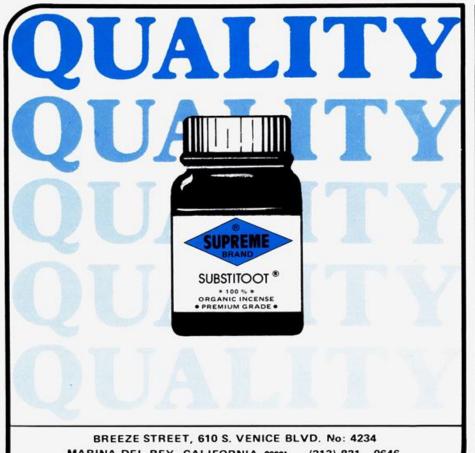


TOUT SUITE MEANS CHOP CHOP Razor blades aren't everyone's idea of a cultural symbol. Here's a gadget *très technologique* that will free you forever from the need to conceal a lethal weapon on your peace-loving person. (No, not the Flamethrower Pocketbook. We did that last month.) The Equaliner dispenses perfect premeasured lines with exactly three flicks of the wrist. A must for those on low-salt diets. From Mainstreet Distributors. About \$10 at retail outlets.



Steve Strauss

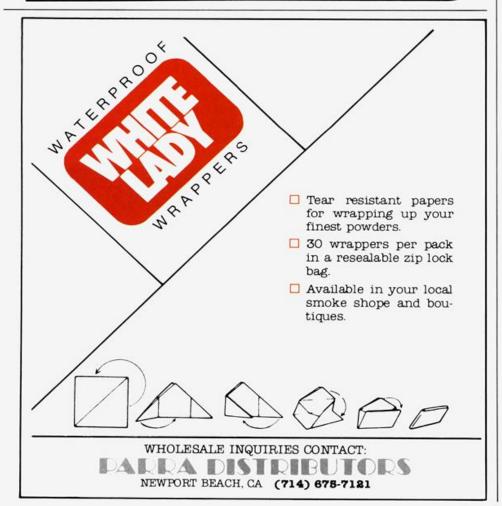
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THE HELENA STAR

continued from page 60

out of here. So there's no point in tying loosely. Belay the lines so the two vessels become one."

Emilio nodded his assent, attentive to Román.

"First, load on what they brought us: food, engine parts and the water. Then, cram in all she'll take. ¿Ya sabes? Got it? Only one lantern in the hold and trabajar rápido. Work as fast as you can."

"Ellos, ¿cuántos son? How many are they?" "Parece que dos. It looks like two...Don't count on them. Load on all you can."

"Okay. ¿Algo más? Anything else?"

"No. I'll be checking. And tell the men. We are in the middle of a very large and hectic channel. With a little luck everything will turn out okay."

Just then the yacht began to veer toward starboard, reducing speed further. I reduced our own speed almost completely, to where we were barely moving. Román opened the windows, letting in a rush of cold air that filled the helmroom.

"¡Ahí viene! Here she comes! Keep the bow steady!"

That wasn't so easy, because at such a slow speed you had to turn the wheel wildly to keep steady.

The Joli drew near slowly after letting us pass her bow, and with the first try she drew close aboard, right opposite the engine-room door. I felt the light bump of her skids against our side and I knew that they were throwing over her lines.

The yacht had been firmly moored and our crewmen were taking out large lightcolored bundles from the Joli. I couldn't tell what they were, but it mattered little to me.

Román returned with an orange.

"Toma. Son las primicias. The first fruits."

"Are we unloading yet?"

"No. They are removing the last of their sails from their hold. Now they will start."

"¿Todo bien? Is all well?"

He gave me a wry look. "I hope so. If it doesn't all go well..." The universal onefinger gesture was very graphic.

In the hold, three men lifted the bales of marijuana; two others grabbed them from the deck and heaved them toward the yacht, aiming for the mouth of the hold. There, like a basketball dribbler, was Juancho pushing ahead, shoving aside or pounding the bales. Fernando was stowing however many he could inside the sailboat's deposit. I couldn't see the faces; I couldn't hear the voices. Amidst the shadows of the two decks, the muffled fall of the bales acquired a certain rhythm, and the men's silhouettes added to the eerie, grotesque atmosphere.

About three in the morning, Juancho and Fernando secured the very last bale that could be crammed into the sports yacht. Or, more accurately at this point, into the yacht's gallery. There was no crevice, at least not that I could see from the bridge, where a bale of marimba had not been crammed.

It was unbelievable! ¡Incretble! We had pulled off an imposible offloading in the middle of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and within sight of two or three cities! But we weren't about to lie back and congratulate ourselves for this derring-do. The sailboat dropped the lines, tilted with the wind, drew a graceful curve and rapidly vanished into the darkness.

After we cleared the strait, the atmosphere calmed down. Juancho took over his watch at the helm and the captain took the rest of the crew to the poop deck where the provisions brought by the sailboat awaited storing. He sent for me a few minutes later and I found him in the officers' dining room facing a plate of fresh tomatoes, cheese and two cans of Canadian lager.

"Here's the situation: All they've got is that yacht. And with that you can't unload outside the strait."

"Which fact they knew before we left Colombia, no?"

Román went on as if he hadn't heard me: "Entonces, they're going to find another boat, one capable of taking the whole load, and we will meet again in three days."

"¿Dónde? Where?"

"Same hour, same place as the first rendezvous."

That was not convincing. If for weeks they had not been able to scrounge up a suitable boat, it was doubtful they would be able to dig one up in three days. Or could it be they hadn't even tried?

On the third day we were at the rendezyous site.

We waited for over an hour and nothing and nobody came to meet us. We then sailed on slowly toward the Strait of Juan de Fuca, in the hope that they might have been delayed for some reason and we might come across them on the way.

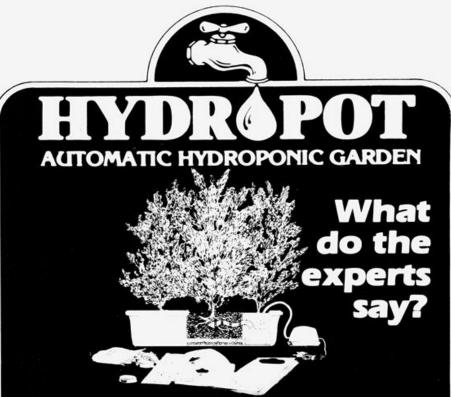
Nothing. The Helena had been "jilted."

In the morning Román made contact with the "bridgepoint" (which we never knew if it was in Colombia, only beyond the Vancouver breakwater) and clearly expressed our situation and our anxiety.

"Yesterday, no one showed up for the lumber. We waited much longer than we were supposed to and then, thinking they might have broken down on the way, we went looking for them on the highway, almost to the next town. But there wasn't the slightest indication that they had left. This has created a very difficult situation. Our time was up four days ago. We have been waiting for our relief so we can go, and this just cannot keep going on and on!... Over!"

From the other side there was a short silence, and then a neutral voice, in an indifferent and professional tone answered:

"Entendido. Understood. I will relay all that immediately to the 'management.' They were sure you had already turned everything over to your relief yesterday... I suggest we speak again this evening at the continued on page 76



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COCAINE CONFIDENTIAL

continued from page 67

the extra acid is not used, most of the hygrine will remain in the solution from which the cocaine has been removed.) The cocaine decomposition is the reason that an overabundance of hygrine is usually accompanied by benzoylecgonine and ecgonine. A sweet smell, reminiscent of wintergreen, is also caused by the breakdown, not by the hygrine.

The hygrines are colorless, volatile oils that are extremely alkaline and possess a very bitter taste. They do not dull the appearance of the cocaine as will cocamine, but they will increase its tendency to attract moisture from the air. Since they possess little or no psychoactive qualities of their own, they will merely lessen the stimulation of cocaine. The excess hydrochloric acid, added when the hygrine was precipitated, is very irritating to the nasal membranes. When the nose neutralizes the excess acid, the hygrine becomes insoluble in water and is poorly absorbed, so it further irritates the nose.

Significant amounts of cocamine and hygrine are found in the leaves of *E. novogranatense*. While they may be present in other species of coca, the amount is minute in comparison. We can therefore assume that cocaine containing large amounts of these alkaloids originated in Colombia or Peru.

THE "OTHER" CAINES continued from page 43

fide *drugs* in it, caffeine and phenylpropanolamine, which may or may not help spice up the placebo effect. Propolamine is a decongestant with mildly speedy side effects much like caffeine. But neither of these directly kindles norepinephrine, like coke does, so whether they help the "high" along is debatable; it's even conceivable that since they *do* exert a mild psychotropic effect, caffeine and phenylpropanolamine may diffuse or inhibit the placebo cocaine buzz. If the stuff contained *only* the psychotropically inert nose-freezing agent, it might work even better. Who knows?

It would have been grandly scientific, therefore, to systematically compare Toot with Pseudo Caine Incense. Pseudo Caine, to go by my nasal tract at least, has nothing whatsoever in it but procaine or lidocaine or some other freeze agent. Snort it and you are simply not there from cheekbones to chin. Tap a dab under your tongue and your mouth brims over with spit, and you have dreadful dentist's-office flashbacks. So theoretically, we could have used Psuedo Caine as a sort of lab standard for Toot, to see if the psychotropics in Toot enhanced or diminished the placebo coke high. That is, if our tests were run with any semblance of objectivity, along the most rudimentary of empirical guidelines. But, they weren't.

Of those here who snorted, about threequarters reported a "high." In one case-that of Sloman, still impressionable in spite of all -it lasted nine whole minutes. A recognized connoisseur of coke, who shall remain discreetly nameless here, went up for "about six seconds" before he recognized the freeze as spurious. But Antonio Huneeus, who grew up in the Andes, did not get high at all. "A waste of time and resources," Antonio "wouldn't bother" getting laid under its influence, at all. Is it true love, after all, behind caffeine and phenylpropanolamine?

On the other hand, Antonio did record "visual" perceptual changes behind the stuff, without elaborating; the nameless connoisseur also volunteered that it "makes me see colors"; and for Bob LaBrasca it was as though "Larry Sloman looked like Kinky Friedman". This is odd, since there's nothing in any of the products tested that ought to derange the visual cortex in the slightest. It could possibly be that these substances were so profoundly devoid of psychoactive effect for these people that they invented this visual phenomenon for it, more or less out of the goodness of their hearts.

"Takes you the same direction as coke," offered one tester; "looks generally similar, but not so refined a head." This individual, like Sloman, was high for nearly a half hour behind the fake flake, but would still only recommend it to "a beat artist," since the high, though "slightly exhilarating," obviously wasn't worth the annoyance of the "runny nose." Sloman himself would only do any of it in preference to coke "in a tornado"; he would go home with a lady who had some only (he lied) "if it's free." Sloman's ultimate assessment: "It's exactly like coke, only without the euphoria". Even for those it gets off, then, bogus blow apparently leaves them feeling vaguely resentful, burnt out of a decent high.

Somebody got downright wired, though. "Slight burn," they noted, "tastes lousy." How long was the high? "Oh, about ten inches." And how would they work off a candy-caine inflamed libido? "Animalistic sex- with laminated porno shots and fruits." Would they go home with somebody who had some? "Where is his apartment?" What would they like to do under its influence? "Its illegal counterpart," was the plaintive response. This person, though clearly touched, was obviously disappointed and resentful in the sequel to the placebo high, and predicted that the minorities would react likewise.

Nearly everyone said they wanted to chop up their loved ones with axes under Toot. But then, they said the same thing about every other sort of junk dope. "Ax? Yes, axes. Oh, yes. So shiny. So clean. Ax. Yes." Loved ones are in trouble nowadays, to go by this test poll. There was a minority of respondents who were unsure what they wanted to do with their loved ones, but these were typically the respondents who answered the brain-damage query by saying things like "Can't understand the question" or "Ah, gosh, how, why, who?"

BUTYL NITRITE

continued from page 43

macologically active in the human body. "A slight Doppler shift," was the most evocative characterization of the high: "full, flushed, swelling head." For one lucky person, "the world turned flat."

Pointedly, though practically everyone wisecracked about picking up brain damage from other kinds of junk dope, no one officially imputed brain damage to butyl nitrite in writing: "The words just don't come to mind," was the snarkiest brain-damage comment on record. This is funny, because it is still widely suspected, even in these quarters, that butyl has special hazards in this respect. "I didn't try it," one of the caine testers told me. "I like the drug okay, but I don't like to think about what it does along the way." [Mind you, we were smoking authentic Burmese opium at that moment.) But no one put it in writing. It was as though we staunch drug-culture patriots didn't want to risk further maligning this notorious inhalant substance, and covered for it; which is triply absurd, considering that the craven merchandisers of Hardware, Locker Room and so on won't buy ad space in High Times anymore, lest their room odorizers commence to pick up heat from the "concerned parents" antidope phalange. Personally, I wish the stuff did cause brain damage.

But it doesn't, alas, and one cunning butyl merchandiser has even increased its safety margin by producing it in the form of a gooey, gelatinous, translucent gunk, labeled "Zap Zolid". This way, if you stand up suddenly while whiffing out of the bottle, that highly corrosive fluid can't possibly spill up your nose when you pass out and fall down. Some folks here even swore that Zap Zolid was heavier than other brands-"like amyl nitrite laced with TNT"-though others were equally convinced that Locker Room was tops: "It's manlier," snarked Barkin.

It was hard to tell with which of its more notorious user populations—homosexuals or disco freaks—this substance is currently most unflatteringly identified. It was variously recommended to "poor gays" or "gay athletes" or to "Rex Reed" (whatever that signifies). On the other hand, more than one respondent felt "compelled to disco" under its influence, and another implicated butyl in the cultivation of "thousands of born-again disco enthusiasts." It was commonly predicted that the furnishing of butyl to minorities would be pernicious, in that the quality of disco music would probably get even more atrocious.

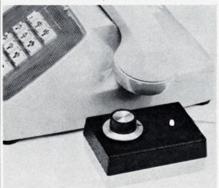
In the sequel, butyl mainly only inspired individual testers to "get some fresh air" or simply to "sit down." The only benefit that might proceed from its widespread provenance in the United States, one calculated, would be "a rise in the GNP from the greatly increased sale of aspirin".

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THE HELENA STAR

continued from page 73

usual hour on the other frequency. I should have an answer at that time. Over."

"Está bien. All right. I'll call you this evening on the other side. Over and out!"

He stood a moment looking at the microphone, as though expecting a reaction to be answered. He shrugged his shoulders and tiredly told me: "That's all we can do, at least for now!"

"And now what happens? I mean: What will that fucker do with your message?"

"I suppose the radio operator calls the *gente* in Colombia and tells them what's happening. They will call the people here and find out what's holding them up. I suppose they will put a little order into disorder and decide what has to be done and then tell us."

At 8 P.M. that evening we waited in the radio room for the call from Taboga, the code name for our radio contact.

Román and I were alone. In the helmroom, Condorito had taken over the watch a moment before.

"Vancouver...! Taboga calling."

"Go ahead, Taboga. I read you. Over."

"Bueno. I have a message for you. Your relief is having trouble mobilizing the equipment. I relayed your message and the 'management' called them. It looks like they can't meet you until next Sunday. Do you read me?"

"Sf. I read you," Román answered wearily. "Sunday. That is, in five days?"

"Correcto. I explained your situation and relayed your message. They asked me to tell you the following: If you think you cannot wait, leave everything and go home. I repeat: If you think you cannot wait, leave everything and go home. The head office says that you have done your part. They leave the decision in your hands. You are the ones who know what the situation is out there. If it is possible to do it, wait for them until Sunday; if not, drop and return. Over."

The captain let the air escape from his lungs in what was almost a snort, as he slowly shook his head in a gesture of unbelief.

He looked at me and I shrugged my shoulders.

"Okay, Taboga. Tell them that I'll let them know tomorrow morning what we're going to do. I'll call at the usual hour. Another thing: In the event we wait until Sunday, will the time and place be the same? Over."

"Todo igual, Vancouver! Everything the same!" (And the note of happiness or relief in his voice was not lost on me.) "Perfecto! I'll wait for your call in the morning.; Buena suerte!... Good luck! Taboga clear."

Román turned off the receiver, pursed his lips and looked at me questioningly.

"Sunday." I said. "Five days."

"Bueno...If the weather holds up, we can sail a couple of days southward, slowly, and return."

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OZIUM AIR CONDITIONER continued from page 44

"Somebody's brother-in-law," I reasoned to myself, admiring the gimmick in my fingers, "works for Parke Davis in their deodorant factory, and somehow got a line on a few gross of discontinued spray dispensers. So this guy bought them, pumped them full of propylene glycol and printed off these tantalizing Ozium labels. What a great scam! Thing is, what does it do for you?"

It was impossible to tell, all by myself, whether whiffing the ejaculant of the Ozium as it evaporated produced a high of any sort. It might or it might not; it was one of those really iffy propositions. It wasn't a solvent or propellant high, for sure—I sniffed enough glue in my model-building youth to know what that's like—but it was persistent as all hell, lurking in the air for whole cubic yards about one for five to ten minutes after spraying. It's merchandised, much like butyl, as an "air conditioner."

Interesting modification of placebo mechanics, this Ozium," I ultimately concluded. Though it was doubtful if it really got you high in the least, its suggestive brand name, and its proximity in a head shop to other sorts of junk dope, could probably cue a lot of impressionable drug-starved consumers into believing it would mildly alter their consciousness. Once suitably cued, of course, they would get high off it; and the exceptionally broad dispersion and tenacity of the metallic afterstench would keep them cued into this condition of autosuggested intoxication for five to ten minutes. A chilling notion, by God. The only people I know about who are hip enough to placebo mechanics to even conceive of such a scam are certain notorious neurobiologists doing endorphin research at Stanford and Johns Hopkins; if these people ever start publicly merchandising the horrible intuitions into human behavior they've developed, we will all be just so many lab rats in Skinner boxes from that time forth forever.

"Hey, you want to try some of this Ozium?" I asked Andy Kowl toward the end of a junk-dope orgy. Kowl at that point was squatting on his haunches, beaming into vacant space through a red-flushed face, with an empty nitrous balloon in one hand and a bottle of Zap Zolid in the other. Blinking away the pretty lights, he smiled at the Ozium tube in a downright comradely fashion for a moment, and then shook his head. "That's not dope. It's an air freshener."

"With a name like Ozium?"

"We bought a case of them last week," Kowl explained, through the bubbling mirth. "It's for when people smoke pot in the office. This is the one thing that'll cut the smell entirely. It's an air freshener, Latimer."

"Well, God damn," sez I, squirting a hit into the noxious blue cloud of smoke from the "herbal mixture" joint I had torched up. "That sets my mind at ease, such as it is."

NITROUS OXIDE

continued from page 44

mately realizing that continual drug-induced euphoria is not really the original Happy Hunting Grounds after all, then tried to get rid of that horrible great blue tank. It took weeks. It turned into an incubus, an albatross, a white elephant, a 40-pound talisman of self-loathing and guilt for Johnny Bob. He has been notably moderate since then in his intake of any drug, except firewater, of course. ("I have been programmed genetically by your white culture to be alcoholic" is his alibi.)

The little four-inch chargers that look like anesthesia tanks in miniature have drawbacks of their own, admittedly. To use them properly, one must fit them into a special metal twist-and-puncture cylinder and hook that up to a plastic balloon. Each charger only produces enough gas for one hit, so the huffer's slobbering reverie is continually disrupted by the necessity of removing the old charger and popping in a new one. The metal twist cylinder soon gets cold enough to frostbite one's fingertips and has to be left to lie for a precious quarter hour or so, when one could and should, for Christ's sake, be getting high! Comfortless proposition, nitrous whiffing.

"You have to get the whole whippet charger into your head at once," Bob LaBrasca was insisting, after the umpteenth balloon. Then, looking down from his six-three altitude, he added scientifically, "Of course, I guess it depends on body size...." In fact, LaBrasca was being a positive Walter Reed with this nitrous-testing project, selflessly subjecting himself to the possible horrors of every charger he could get his great bloody hands on, actively courting an N2Overdose. It was he indeed who discovered the special synergy of nitrous oxide with butyl nitrite. Carefully filling two balloons with nitrous and force-whiffing a double dose, LaBrasca then folded one nostril inward and inhaled a subsequent lungful of Zap Zolid. "Oh ho," he remarked, turning on his heel and embracing the wall full length, "that's a pretty intense layering effect."

Perceiving that he survived in spite of it, everyone else tried this special synergy. The question's still open whether it's more efficient to do the nitrous first and then the butyl, or vice versa. I don't recall which sequence brought on the interior wah-wahs quicker, but then I don't recall very much of the whole episode, beyond the Messerschmitts howling in at two o'clock high. Publisher Kowl, who is nearly LaBrasca's body size, was sitting on the floor all red-faced at the point where my notes became indecipherable. "Notice how nitrous slightly lowers your voice," LaBrasca was scientificating. "It must relax the larynx, in distinction to helium, which tightens it." It made perfect sense, too, even though his voice was absolutely normal as he was speaking.

LETTUCE OPIUM

continued from page 44

few score dozen isomers of morphine in nature, but most of them are psychotropically inert. It would be a really uncharacteristically benevolent act of providence if anything as common, mundane and cheap as lettuce could be easily restewed so as to get a person high at all. Nice theory, lettuce opium, but very unlikely.

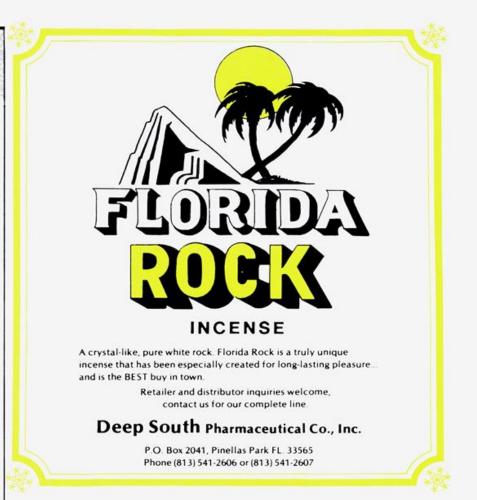
In fact, the subjective high itself isn't anything to write home about. When lit and inhaled through a pipe, the smoke from this tarry matter only lays the elementary groundwork for an opoid high, it turns out. That is to say, the smoke seems to seep subtly into your spine at first, and then to convey a vaguely tinglesome sense of ease down the backs of your legs and from your shoulders to your elbows. It does nothing at all to your head, except to call attention, quite discreetly, to this subtle rushing and rustling among your spinal ganglia. I'd call it mildly relaxing.

This special tingle persists maybe eight to ten minutes after a few hooks of lettuce O, fading so quietly that you start wondering if it was ever really there, and feel vaguely inclined to try another hit to make sure. Of all the drugs in my life, it reminds me most of wild Indian tobacco, which most farm kids chew just because it makes your spit taste sassy-or so we farm kids are always told, anyway. Actually, Indian tobacco contains a direct ganglionic-stimulating agent—a drug, by God-which tickles up and down the backbone just like nicotine does, kindling little neuroelectric circuits between the vertebrae, which is a very nice feeling. Of course, these little nerve-juice circuits quickly gain a resistance to this crude stimulation, so you have to chew more and more Indian tobacco to get the same effect, and you feel vaguely compelled to do so, too. In other words, you get addicted.

Lettuce opium, then, I'd predict confidently, should be technically addictive, much like tobacco. In fact, it should be notably heavier than tobacco in this respect, since though almost everyone at this junkdope orgy smokes cigarettes, we all picked up on this lettuce-opium backbone tingle, despite our preestablished nicotine tolerance. A tobacco virgin would go absolutely bananas behind lettuce opium-if only it got you high.

Unhappily, lettuce opium lacks this one all-important reinforcing element that otherwise would have millions of people ripping off televisions and pimping their own grandmothers to score it. All it does is tickle your backbone and induce your backbone to politely ask to be tickled some more. We natural-born junkies are into feeding our habits, not our backbones.

Just as well," commented Kowl. "We wouldn't want to create a generation of lettuceheads."

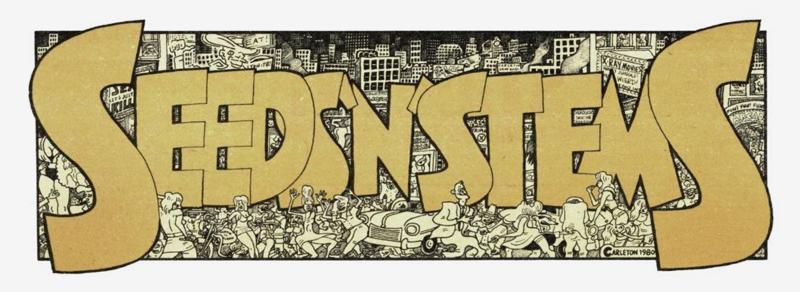


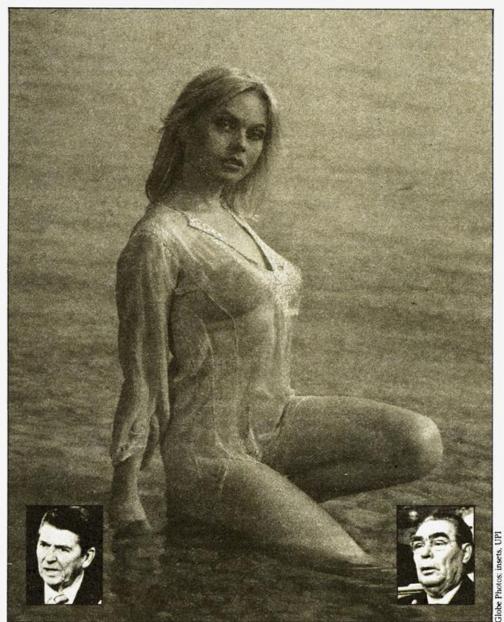




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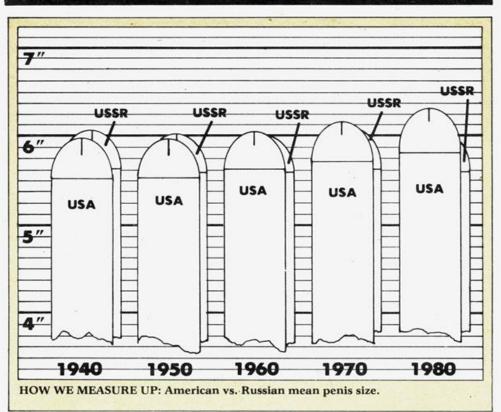
Pres. Ronald Reagan (inset left) delivered staggering rebuke of USSR chief Leonid Brezhnev (inset right), while sultry TV actress Desirée Thigh denied Decency in Media charges that she shows too much flesh in new soap opera, "Rush To Calamity." Says Desirée: "I'm just as born-again as any other tithe-paying member of the Moral Majority. It's silly."

PREZ TO BREZH: DROP DEAD!

washington, D.C.-Pres. Ronald Reagan today charged the leaders of the Soviet Union with "supporting international terrorism, aiding insurgents around the world in the undermining of legitimate authoritarian governments, and plotting to enslave the West. Moreover, they don't believe in God and they oppress anyone who does. And they do their best to sabotage and undermine the well-being of all Americans." In his 417th televised denouncement of USSR imperialism since taking office last year, the president suggested that Communist skulduggery may be "directly or indirectly responsible" for the failure of his economic-reconstruction campaign to show any positive results so

Visibly overheated by the television lights in the White House press room, the president slipped away "to catch a few winks" after his emotional address. Secretary of State Alexander Haig assured reporters that "the country will be in firm, capable hands" during the president's 16-hour nap. After awakening tomorrow morning, the president is expected to address domestic political issues by citing drugs, sexual immorality and the fragmentation of the American nuclear family—besides Communism—as the main obstacles to the success of his economic-reorganization plan.

General Alexander Laigh FRSIDE STRAIGHT



As secretary of state and as a man holding the rank of general people frequently ask me, "Say, what about all this stuff about the Russians having us out-bombed by a heap?" Also, many Americans want to know whether it is true that the Russians have bigger cocks than us. All I can say is the rumor they are being paid to spread is completely unfounded. The second rumor, that is. There was a time immediately following World War II when the Russians had a slight edge over Americans in mean penis size, but since that time the invention of the vacuum-powered penis extender has shifted the baloney-balance in America's favor. I might also point out that American sexual technology is superior. Case in point: the Mach VI double-ended latex dildo with the wobble-action vibrator head. This device is far in advance of anything the Russians can wield in the field. In addition to our equipment superiority, Americans also are way out in front in terms of technique; truly it is not all "meat"; a lot of it is "motion"

As for the arms imbalance, I would have to say that unless we redouble our efforts in this area we are in grave danger of losing the slight advantage we currently hold over the Russians in arms. Think of it this way. If our "arms" (missiles, etc.) and the Russians'

"arms" (likewise) were real arms, it might be easier to visualize the problem.

Imagine the Russians are a boxer with extremely long, fat, clumsy, hairy arms, at the end of which are appended tiny little fists. The U.S. is a boxer with long, strong, supple arms ending in hard, tough, properly proportioned fists. But the Russian's big, powerful arms are growing longer and his fists are growing bigger, because his trainer, world Communism, is giving him illegal drugs. While the U.S. boxer's arms are getting weaker, because prostitutes (liberals) are taking him to nightclubs and giving him champagne and nonfilter cigarettes.

If you study and consider the matter as I have explained it to you, you should be able to understand unless you have more in common mentally with a Shetland pony than with a thinking man such as myself.

What's the drill for us readers in this here arms race? you are doubtless thinking of asking the person sitting next to you in the correction-department bus where you are seated reading this. What can I do to help America keep his arms strong? Stop being a tax cheat, or what?

Well, you can start by mailing any ordnance you may happen to find to my old friend Caspar Weinberger, the secretary of defense. By ordnance, I mean old blasting caps in quarries, sweaty old dynamite in mining shacks or magnetic antishipping mines you might come across during the course of a seaside ramble. Just place the material in a big box, label it "personal" and send it to Caspar. He'll know just what to do with it. Keep America strong.

Now on to other matters. I'm sure that many of you are aware that I have been experiencing some difficulties in attempting to secure Congressional approval for the sale of these Awacs planes to the Arabs. Now I want to tell you people just like I told those Congressmen that these Arabs are some of the finest people I know. They are not at all greasy. They are a good deal like Anthony Quinn in the movie Lawrence of Arabia and their huge noses are rather noble and hawklike when you think about it. I would like to state for the record that when the next big one starts I'd like to share my foxhole with an Arab boy.

Most of the trouble over the sale of these Awacs is emanating from the Hebrew country of Israel, where the Jew parliament, the Knish, is in an uproar over the possibility that the Arabs may launch a surprise attack in which they would employ these defensive weapons. I have done my best to assure their strongman, Malachia Bagman, that a surprise attack is entirely contrary to the nature of defensive weapons. He is a stubborn man, however, and argues that by depriving Israel of her ability to surprise-attack the Arabs we deprive her of her most powerful defensive weapon. It is beyond me to say where this will end.

Just this morning I happened to be reading at the breakfast table the sports section of the Washington Post and noticed in the box scores the name of the Houston Astros. It brought home to me with a shock how ill prepared we are to meet and deal with any invader from outer space. As I say, the shock was so great it produced instantaneously, in my pants, an effect that America's most powerful laxatives take 24 hours to produce.

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ON THE TRITE

By William E. Buckteeth

I observe that my journalistic colleagues in The Jew York Times, The New York Review of Jews, and even the Saturday Review (as if there were any remaining question why they publish on Saturday, whereas the remainder of we journalists traditionally rest on Sunday)-I observe, I say, that the esteemed gentlemen of the Eastern Liberal Establishment Press are characteristically unified, even as so many dainty pansies blowing in the same zephyr out of the East (the far, far East, if you scent my drift. From beyond the Dnieper and Dniester!) in characterizing last week's unpleasantness in the Caribbean as "an embarrassment" for the Reagan administration.

Let us therefore resort, in distinction to our Bolshevist-bedazzled brethren, to the bare facts of the case. Pres. Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi of the Republic of Libya, still smarting from the elimination of two of his combat jets over the Gulf of Sidra by American military aircraft last summer, resolved to exercise his own naval forces in the Gulf of Mexico. And he duly carried this resolution into practice. The entire Libyan navy, videlicet, 16 U.S. Coast Guard Surplus 1943-model cutters, 217 canvas-sailed reed feluccas, the president colonel's personal yacht and racing hydrofoils, and an enormous 130-acre floating wooden platform to service an undetermined number of Soviet fighter-aircraft, assembled 150 miles west

of the Cayman Islands, and during a week of mock combat exercises, succeeded in sinking half their own armada by accident.

The embarrassment, then, would seem more appropriately to attach to Mr. Qaddafi than to our own chief executive—who, let's remember, was chosen by the popular voice of the American public. Vox populi, vox Dei, after all. But then, how many of our Eastern Establishment political exegecists ever cock an ear to the vox Dei, except perhaps occasionally on Saturday?

But predictably, the petard on which the liberals are strenuously endeavoring to hoist Mr. Reagan is the initial belligerence of his reaction to this demonstration by Mr. Qaddafi. Arming nuclear missiles and training them on the Libyan area of naval operations could, to the unsophisticated, be interpreted as a physical threat to actually use said missiles. In the event, of course, the missiles were suddenly disarmed, retrained on their customary tactical target-the Communist island of Cuba-and Qaddafi's motley junks and brigs were suffered to continue their "war games" farce without molestation, to the termination of the operation.

So now we are treated to the curious spectacle of dove-enamored liberal intellectuals chastising a conservative president for his *forbearance* to unleash nuclear weapons on a Soviet client, and, by the by, turn the

central Caribbean into a radioactive sitz bath for 200,000 years. What else but plain meanness and ignorance could promote such a 180-degree *volte-face* of customary liberal opinion?

Now let us take advantage of certain special privileges and privacies enjoyed by your humble correspondent. It is no secret that some time ago I was employed in the Mexico City office of the Central Intelligence Agency. I remain proud of so serving this my nation, and grow ever prouder every time some Liberal scribe characterizes that particular CIA office as "the shock shop," or "Thumbscrew Central." In any event, old friends in The Company (as we veterans are entitled to call it) do from time to time furnish me with privileged materials appropriate, even uniquely necessary, to an unclouded understanding of such events as last week's Caribbean incident.

In this particular case, classified CIA documents clearly show that the very admirals of the Libyan fleet in last week's exercise were none other than my whilom CIA colleagues, Mr. Frank Terpil and Mr. Edwin Wilson. To incinerate the Libyan navy, then, would have necessarily involved the premature cremation of these two Americans, whose record of service to American Democracy dates back to the brave and doomed Bay of Pigs incident—which of course the liberals are always ready to consign to the close-stool of history, along with anyone involved in it.

Should a conservative president, then, aggrandize the political prejudices of the Liberal Establishment, by terminating these two seasoned CIA veterans in a holocaust of hasty overreaction to the tantrum of a mad tinhorn Arab dictator? Absurd! As soon as Mr. Reagan was duly advised, through CIA channels, of the fatal consequences of such a reaction, of course he prudently desisted. For the record of services provided America by Messrs. Terpil and Wilson is incontestable, whereas charges that they have trained torturers for Idi Amin, furnished tons of terrorist gelignite to Colonel Qaddafi, and hired hit men to assassinate political targets in the American heartland itself-well, consider that you read all these things first in The Jew York Times.

Myself, I like to believe that howsoever deeply into dung the likes of Wilson, Terpil and other brave CIA veterans are dipped by the Eastern Liberal Establishment Press, history will ultimately show that all along they were working, secretly and amid terrible danger, for Truth, Justice and the American Way.

Yes—Truth, Justice and the American Way. These used to be cliches. But we have given them a formidable and terrible new meaning.





1001 THOUGHTS ABOUT DRUGS

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HE STICKS IT OUT THROUGH A BAD day, and when a good day comes he gets drunk.

Russian saying

HEDONISM IS HUMANISM GONE TO

Robert Strausz-Hupé

2 I CANNOT BEAR A DRUNKEN SOT, Who wastes away his life-He's only wedded to his pot, And cannot love his wife.

York, 182?

203 In a Carefully Prepared, Loving LSD session, a woman will inevitably have several hundred orgasms.

Tim Leary

4 Dr. Jay B. Brodsky of Stanford University Medical Center says a survey of 40,000 dentists and 30,000 dental assistants shows their regular exposure to nitrous oxide, the gas used to ease dental pain, results in neurological damage.

The damage causes numbness, tingling and muscle weakness in arms and legs; and severe amnesia.

"Those heavily exposed to nitrous oxide have a three-to-four times greater incidence of such symptoms as those who are not exposed," Dr. Brodsky said.

He thinks the gas may also be responsible for a higher incidence of spontaneous abortion recorded for dental nurses and assistants.

> Weekly World News, April 21, 1981

205 HEROIN IS MY SHEPHERD I shall always want.

206 COULD MAN BE DRUNK FOR EVER With liquor, love or fights, Lief should I rouse at morning And lief lie down of nights. But men at whiles are sober And think by fits and starts, And if they think, they fasten Their hands upon their hearts.

A.E. Housman, Last Poems

MEANWHILE, THE U.S. DEPART-207 ment of Agriculture reports that illegal marijuana plantations are thriving in virtually every national forest in the Pacific Northwest and in the South. Rangers recently reported finding an estimated \$5 million in illicit weed growing in one gar-den in the Bankhead National Forest in Alabama. USDA officials say they are planning a crackdown on such cultivation because they fear that "overt violence, even murder, might be resorted to in order to protect multi-million dollar investments in marijuana farming."

Star Root, February 26, 1981 via ZNS



8 HELP STAMP OUT ALCOHOLISM; Give a bum a joint.

Graffito, Bowery, New York City, 1969



9 HASHEESH I CALLED THE DRUG OF the traveller. The whole East, from Greece to farthest China, lay in the compass of a township; no outlay was necessary on the journey. For the humble sum of six cents I might purchase an excursion ticket all over the earth.

Fitz Hugh Ludlow, 1860

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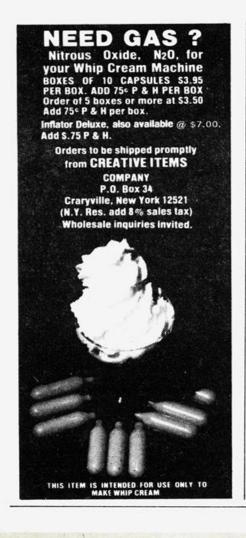
THERE ARE TWO ETHICS AT WAR: 211 one Puritanical, mean, narrow, frightened. The other Hedonistic, "crazy," outgoing, "free". Between these two ethics, in this war, there will be many battles, casual-ties, prisoners, yes deaths. The forecast for resolution of this conflict is not optimistic.

Tuli Kupferberg, April 1981

212 Hemp Hemp Hurray! James Joyce, Finnegan's Wake

213 IOTHE RESCUE OF BOOZE THE One lems, comes booze-free beer. One TO THE RESCUE OF BOOZE-LESS MOSof those inevitable marketing advances, designed to circumvent the Muslim ban on liquor, NAB (Non-Alcoholic Beer), newly patented by Carlsberg, is expected to be sold mainly in the Third World. It's a powder which, mixed with water, turns into a substance that, they say, looks and tastes like

New York Post, February 27, 1980



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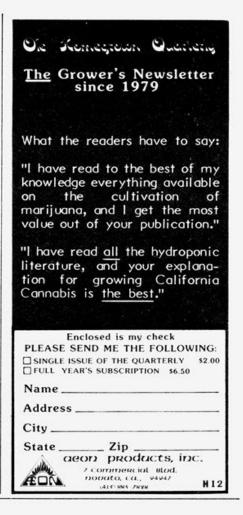
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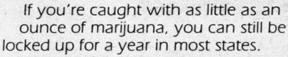
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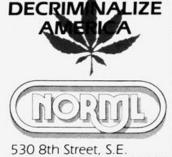
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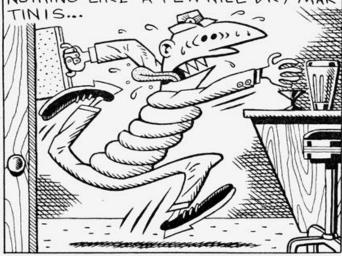
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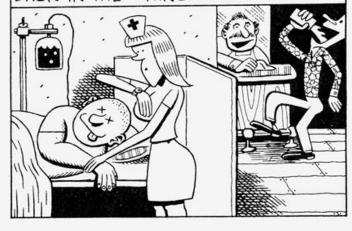
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VISIONS

Portrait of Nick

Even though I write about film, there are only a handful of directors I've known personally. One of them-a great one-was Nick Ray, the director of Rebel Without a Cause, They Live By Night, Bigger Than Life and Johnny Guitar. I met him under hectic circumstances at a 1973 retrospective at the University of Wisconsin. He was an idol of mine, but when he showed up it was something of a shock. He fit his friend Elia Kazan's description: "a sweet man who's had a very hard life." Tall, flamboyant, a black patch over one eye, head crowned with a mass of unruly gray, he looked like a melancholy pirate, and he had the presence and intensity of a Shakespearean actor gone slightly to seed. He was also obviously ravaged by alcoholism. He tossed down gin like iced tea; and at his public appearances, his speech was slurred. He spoke very, very slowly, dragging his words out . . . and when he paused, it would sometimes last for an unnervingly long time. But he seemed to enjoy the stay. I didn't see him again for three years.

When I did, in 1976, he and his wife Susan were living in a loft on Spring and East Broadway (right above HIGH TIMES New Morning Bookstore). The place was immense, bare, slashed with sunlight. I visited Nick and Susan there several times. A film project was going down the drain, and his moods would fluctuate under liquor, but, despite his problems he was kind and generous. He'd made such a violent, sad impression on me in Madison-like a man drowning or clawing at shadows-that I was happy to see him on his turf, fairly secure among people who loved him. But, on my last visit, in 1978, Susan told me I had to prepare myself; something had happened: Nick had lung and bone cancer. It was all right, he was under treatment, the malignancy was arrested-but he looked different. He was shrunken, bent and balding, from chemotherapy. When we talked he would sometimes wince and cry out or double over.

I went with him to his production class at NYU, but in the middle he tired and had to rest in his office. He stretched across a couch and—the pain really riddling him now—asked me to light him some Carltons; at one point, he stared at the cigarette and said: "You know, of all the things I've had to give up, these have been the hardest..."

That night he mentioned he was working on something with the young German director Wim Wenders. I tried to make myself useful; offered by buy some Haagen-Dazs vanilla ice cream that Susan wanted, but the store was closed. We didn't talk much about films. Instead we watched the Yankees and Dodgers in the World Series

by Mike Wilmington



Lightning Over Water: Wim Wenders (right) helped Nick Ray create his testament.

(he liked Bucky Dent); and, after it was over, I mumbled something about a phone call; and he got the impression I needed a place to stay. I didn't—but his quick offer touched me; and that night I curled up on the spare bed (it had a long quilt and an incongruous pile of Winnie-the-Pooh dolls) beside a wall of high windows. The city lights streamed down; occasionally I could hear a cough or moan across the room; and I lay there, troubled, in darkness...

So now, three years later-three years after he died-I finally saw the "thing he was working on with Wim": Lightning Over Water-much of it shot in the Spring Street loft in those last months. Very hard, very clear. It shows a series of meetings between Ray and Wenders-and the people (Susan, the film crew) who were with him at the end. We see Nick and Wim talking together, arguing over what to shoot, what it means. We see Nick traveling to a college to show The Lusty Men; we see him lying haggard on a hospital bed; we see him rehearsing a play; and we see an astonishing scene-the last scene he ever made-which begins as a King Lear takeoff with Ronee Blakeley and ends with Nick facing the camera, alone, muttering, raging, making savage twists on Wim's name-then crying "Cut!"; recanting again when Wenders calls "Don't cut!" (as if he senses this will be the end, and wants, desperately, to stave it off); then Wenders bowing to Destiny; and Nick, tired, depleted, mask finally off, says, with weariness and finality, "Cut!"—and it's over. And all that's left is the coda: a wake with the crew on the river.

At the festival, many people were shocked by *Lightning Over Water*; someone asked Wenders how he could subject everyone to such a cruel experience. But someone else, one of the oldest people there —rose up and said, smiling: "I think you've got it all wrong. This isn't cruel. This isn't a film about death. It's a film about life!" And

I think he was right, because after seeing Lightning Over Water, I felt something lift from my shoulders. I'd had this feeling of defeat ever since I'd left Nick's place that morning; as if I'd failed him somehow, failed in writing about him, failed even in being a friend-failed in anything maybe but passing him a few cigarettes. And the reason I felt this was that I wanted him-a lot of us did-to shoot another film: either finish We Can't Go Home Again or go on to something else; redeem all those '70s years of booze and struggles, projects that fizzled, mockery, badmouthing, and life on the counterculture fringe. (Nick, who'd left Hollywood at his financial peak after 1963, once said that the most important political movement in the world was the Danish youth group the Provos; he also liked to quote Abbie Hoffman's remark: "Politics is living.") We wanted him to prove how great a filmmaker he was, make the screen laugh and sing and scream and weep, and be again what he was in the '50s: the poet of adolescence, of private rebellion, of "the falling night" the man whose work once caused Jean-Luc Godard to say, "Like the sun, [it] makes you close your eyes. Truth is blinding." And nobody could give him that -except Wenders. Grabbing time from his own troubled "Hammett" project, working at what must have been great personal cost, watching someone he loved dying by inches, he gave Nick back his face and his voice. He helped him create his testament. The film appears cruel only because, keeping faith with someone, you may risk appearing cruel. You expose yourself and them to the marrow—and, at that moment, the shutter opens. The pitiless light becomes compassionate.

So, for me, Wenders-and Nick and the others-succeeded. And I felt the weight lift away, as it did for a few moments that fall morning back on Spring Street. I had left the loft, said goodbye, and was out on the street, when suddenly I remembered the Haagen-Dazs ice cream Susan had wanted the night before. This time the store was open; but when Nick answered my knock and saw me, he laughed. I don't know exactly what struck him so funny; maybe I looked a little dumb, popping back in after an emotional goodbye, a melting pint of vanilla ice cream in my hand. But I was glad I'd handed him a laugh. Daylight was streaking over the scarred floorboards, drenching them. He turned away, and I closed the door, and that was the last I saw of Nick Ray-bathrobe flopping around his legs, holding the little pint of Haagen-Dazs, walking away from me, laughing.

CONNOISSEUR

continued from page 17

Hello Out There, Haze Brothers

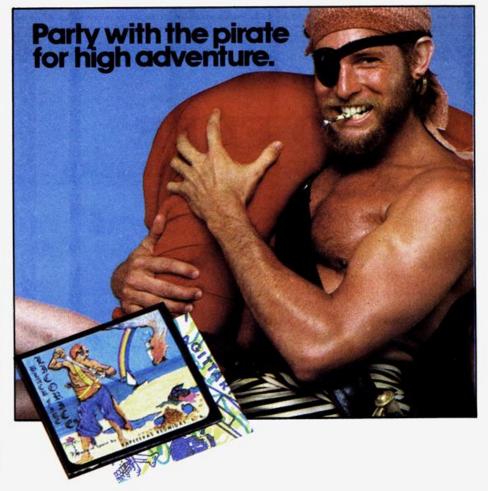
This is an item about some grass I didn't get to taste and why. You see, the Haze brothers were in town this year and they snubbed me. Not only snubbed me but bad-mouthed me to everyone who cared to listen to their tale of alleged mistreatment by the medianamely me. For those of you who are not religious readers of the column and the magazine, I should point out that the Haze brothers are semilegendary California growers whom I immortalized in one of my full-color cartoon adventures that so many of you have been requesting more of. The Haze brothers grow great California grass, but so do many other California growers. The Haze brothers' buds are among the very best, but without me they would just be unknown farmers. I made them national heroes. Still they snub me. Why? Because they misunderstood the clever humor in the cartoon in question. They didn't get the joke. They thought I was making fun of them, but in my lovable, self-deprecating way I was making fun of myself. You see, the Haze brothers had come to town a couple of years ago to try to prove to me that I had erred in my assertion that most Californian sinsemilla was overpriced and overrated. In the cartoon I envisioned their arrival in town for a smokeout with "R" as a kind of High Noon (get it?) showdown.

And it was clear to me and clear to most readers of the cartoon that the Haze brothers won: Their Californian was so far superior to most of the commercial sinse going around that I was astonished. I tried to make fun of myself in the cartoon, showing myself trying to keep a straight, unimpressed face-maintain my Connoisseur cool-while in reality my mind was turning into strange shapes and forms under the influence of their heady harvest. I was making fun of myself when I complained that I had to try to mask my pleasure so much that I had to restrain myself from begging them to leave me more samples to savor (when, in fact, they had left me a few joints' worth, which I treasured).

So let's set the record straight here and now: These Haze brothers grow great dope, but they seem to lack a certain subtle sense of humor one usually expects in cannabisconnoisseur circles. Really, fellows, your California is great; it's in a class apart, and any criticisms I've made about Californian grass in any column do not apply to you. Okay, I apologize, get it? Would I be this craven about it unless it was amazingly good? So next time don't forget to leave me samples, don't snub me; you're doing yourselves and the reputation of that great growing state of California a disservice if you do.

The Connoisseur loves feedback from his readers. Write to him c/o HIGH TIMES, 17 West 60th St., New York, NY 10023.







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PLATO'S RETREATISTS

continued from page 52

hangs around 165 in drag.

7/22/81 6:12pm i get it every night/ee Sounds like Laurie.

7/22/81 7:02pm anon Could be Deb.

7/22/81 8:43pm anonymous I saw you again yesterday. For a moment I just wanted to grab and bang you and come in your ass. Those shorts aren't fair. I would do anything to show I am worthy of your snatch. Don't pay any attention to these guys, you are a woman.

Original note writer

7/24/81 3:49pm anon Sounds like Julie.

"Programmers rather than notesfiles freaks are the hardest core addicts," Weizenbaum told me. "But hacking applies to home computing as well as university and all other systems as well. It especially applies to the young people who get hooked at home, working on their own schemes." He sounds much like William Burroughs' describing heroin as the perfect consumer product: It insists upon repeat sales without advertising. Computers don't need pushing. They promise power and satisfaction, winning loyalty in exchange.

= filmnotes =

7/27/81 5:15pm springer/visauth I appreciate all the help. They told me to inform them when I was done here, so they could delete my signon. I may forget to remind them.

7:25pm Hey, Springer. Did you say you were leaving in a few weeks? I'm sure a director of one file can get you a permanent signon.

= notes =

to springer/visauth

Contact me if you need a signon. Something will be arranged. dixon/mfl

The floor of my house lies hidden under papers...I keep forgetting to shuffle them into order. Excuses arise, and I find myself before the whirr, watching orange dots. This manuscript is late. Restless, I dream of messages passing through wires. The typewriter is too slow, too old, too much a part of another world.

Weizenbaum warned us. "Instrumental reason, triumphant technique and unbridled science are addictive," he wrote. "They create a concrete reality, a self-fulfilling nightmare....Why is the crew that has taken us this far cheering? Why do the passengers not look up from their games?... Now that we and no longer God are playing dice with the universe, how do we keep from coming up craps?"

PRESS NEXT TO BEGIN. I rewrite, hacking away at all hours, looking for the conclusion, but the meaning has become a process itself, an interlocking fascination with the metal and light mirrors of the mind.

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On Saturday the 19th, the Light Machine was bombed. Our beautiful 4,000 sq. ft. office-and-manufacturing facility was totally blown away. We are just trying to give our customers the best deal because we like people . . . most people. Anyone can sell at our low prices and still make a good living. That's free enterprise.

We were the second company to advertise Metal Halide lights for horticulture, so we're one of the pioneers in this field. This is a free country, it is our right to sell for less. But if this person thinks he can bomb the Light Machine, threaten the lives of the owners and employees and put us out of business, he is wrong. He will just go directly to jail and not collect \$200. We're still open for business and we are still tough Americans. We have the right to sell the best equipment at the lowest possible price and you have the right to benefit.

If you have any information which will help find these fiends, please call (800) 854-1005, or (714) 748-5710 in California, or cable NAGUAL, San Diego. All responses will be kept completely confidential.



or two days this past autumn a converted livestock barn/airplane hangar in the remote countryside of northeast England was turned into a showcase for almost 30 bands that laid claim to representing the future of rock 'n' roll. Futurama III attracted a large cross section of music-biz cognoscenti, fans, poseurs, trend spotters and press moguls to witness a parade of the most representative collection of postpunk bands to emerge recently out of the British new

The buildup was legitimate. The first Futurama festival was a landmark of newwave trends highlighted by a legendary performance from Johnny Rotten's post-Sex Pistols outfit, Public Image Ltd. Last year's Futurama introduced a new group, Soft Cell, which was topping the British charts during the buildup to III, as much of a justification as a forward-looking collection of groups could ask for.

But if the buildup was justified, the delivery was spotty. While there were enough surprises to make the event more than worthwhile, there was also enough drudgery to make sitting around waiting for something to happen a torturous ordeal. Far too many of the groups treaded extremely safe and shallow water, often to positive response from the audience, but seldom to the excitement of yours truly. I can report, happily, that you should keep an ear peeled for the Passions, Bow-Wow-Wow, Simple Minds, Ludus, and the Sound; several other groups were entertaining if not anything to write home about, but altogether it seems now that the brave experiment of new-wave music in England has settled down for the most part to merely creating its own list of hackneyed show-biz cliches to work off.

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All photos courtesy Retna, Ltd.

One of the most remarkable things about the British music scene is the preponderance of flourishing music festivals. Even though it's been a decade since festivals have been sanctioned in the States, every summer British rock fans can take their pick of several outdoor events over a weekend to hear their favorite bands. Heavy-metal fans are treated to the Reading Festival (a gig that is over two decades in the running), folk buffs have the lively Cambridge folk festival, and now new wavers have Futurama, an event that provides all the late-'60s trappings—backed-up toilets, muddy grounds, wet sleeping bags and fucking under the stars—a rude boy could ask for. The facilities are where the comparison stops, however. Futurama collected a motley crew of kids dressed in rooster haircuts, pastel locks, leather jackets studded with badges and every variety of ghoul/decadent outfit imaginable, but the only mind expanders in evidence were the powerful fumes of British beer. Over my entire two-day stay at the gig I never once detected a whiff of smoke, and while it's certainly possible a few of the new psychedelics fans popped the old tab or two, the audience was comatose enough to guarantee that there weren't too many artificial extenders on hand.

There was plenty of uncharacteristic (for England) sunshine, which proved useful during some of the more dire moments. The local cows provided welcome relief during the afternoon. The very stilted **Sisters of Mercy** attempted their version of Velvet Underground heroin music, a move that has been covered so many times by now that they'd sound more revolutionary covering Chuck Berry—but then again, they probably couldn't manage the progression.

The most relieving feature of the production was that the bands played from two separate stages, so there was virtually no pause between sets. You'd wait around through one incredibly lame set hoping the next one



sistently and purveyed their fashionable fascist posturing, but as much as I wanted to hate 'em, they kept things moving along at a crisp pace that was hard to resist after some of the other sludge I had to wade through. But the next band, the Passions, provided the best moment of the day. A well-crafted, no-nonsense quartet led by the tremendous singer Barbara Gogan, the Passions combined new wave intensity with the subtle flourishes of Byrds-era West Coast countryrock. Their single "I'm in Love with a German Film Star" was widely held to be one of the best songs in England this past year, and their debut record, Thirty Thousand Feet over China, marks them as one of the bands that will make Futurama III look good down

The night's penultimate set belonged to Bauhaus, a ridiculously cliched metal outfit that pounded and postured their way to the best response of the show. Lead singer Peter Murphy stripped down to his briefs to the crowd's delight and twisted in grimacing contortions as if his sweating body was being tortured by the hammer-fisted, turgid drone his band generated, and he was treated like a hero for it. The fans certainly deserved to get off after a tough day on the slab, but it seemed a cheap and joyless exchange.

At least Bauhaus was energetic, as the soporific Gang of Four followed with a set stiff and meaningless enough to provide a welcome finale to the marathon. They came on with all the panache they could muster, vocalist Jon King flailed like a speed-freak marionette and urged the crowd to react, guitarist Andy Gill sliced his best Beefheart imitations against the emptiness of the rhythm section, but the crowd took a look and then just rolled over and went back to sleep. Gang of Four was the major disappointment of Futurama III.

The noontime sun, and with it the resumption of the new-wave conveyer belt, came a bit too soon the next day for many of the punk campers. Unsteady hands worked hard to reassemble the fragile quiffs and rooster hairdos as the groaning and creaking of leather outfits signaled the start of another day's posing. The first few groups offered scant prospects on improving the dreary afternoon fare, although the Tea Set worked their innocuous charm to good ad-Suddenly, though, a band called **Ludus** vantage.

turned the hot afternoon back a decade in time with marvelous Haight-Ashbury-style magic. The quartet alternately evoked such late 60s West Coast stylists as Love, the Dead and the Airplane while maintaining a very personal and unmistakably new-wave approach, a pretty amazing trick that managed to charge this lazy afternoon with real fire. Guitarist Ian Devine, all in black with his beanpole figure exaggerated by a stovepipe hat, spun seamless mandala solos and Garcia-like improvisations over the subtly undulating rhythm section, while Linder Ludus coaxed, screamed and acid-danced in trance (looked a bit like the old Grace Slick at times) exchange with Devine's solos. The set was brilliant and unfortunately too short, interfered with toward the end by the crass keyboardist for the next band, B Movies, who deliberately did a loud sound check during Ludus' final number.

As B Movies plied their heavy-metal Doors sound, Ian and Linder slipped outside the hall and sat with the fans on the grass, bemusedly whiling the afternoon away in another vignette reminiscent of the old festival scenes. Ludus proved to be the exception as a string of warmed-over heavy metal bands masquerading as militant punksters paraded across the stage the rest of the day. It takes guts for Ludus to deliberately go against the grain of British fashion to play long, almost totally improvised sets, but without bands like that there's no future for the music outside of an art studio. "About a year ago we were doing these gigs that were totally improvised," Linder noted, "and we thought people would really hate it, be abusive and walk out. But they didn't and we were really The stupid and crude Martian Joke were surprised."

followed by earnest but boring hard rockers Cry, then came another Doors-style band, Blue Orchids—shades of the '60s again! UK Delay served up a set of chest-pounding heavy metal driven by an excellent bassist who'd do well to ditch his pointless

would be interesting enough to carry you through to the one you were waiting for three bands down the line. My Silent War didn't grab the eye for too long either. Crown of Thorns were psychedelic revivalists right down to the paisley duds and the mid-'60s hard pop proto-punk song styles, but they were flatter than week-old beer. The Ponderosa Glee Boys could well have been drawn and quartered had they stayed onstage much longer. Another Colour offered stale soul food, and a group called Felt, two jerks playing bongos and rhythm guitar, practically emptied the hall.

23 Skidoo benefited from all this lassitude when they came on with a pretty modest but well meaning R&B approach and they got this extremely jaded crowd to its feet for one of the few times of the evening. The Sound fared even better with their fairly conventional but relentlessly determined hard rocking—they clipped that shuddering riff from the Stones' "Gimme Shelter" to open a song called "Missiles" and did a few songs off their new LP From the Lion's Mouth.

S O U N D S



mates for a band with any kind of an idea. The **Diagram Brothers** upped the ante with a sweating set that leaned hard on Beefheart guitar and strong structures to better effect than **Gang of Four** could manage.

The rest of the evening's show was interesting enough to make the whole event worthwhile. Eyeless in Gaza, the guitar and synthesizer duo of Pete Becker and Martyn Bates, lived up to the science fictionfuturist image of the event with a weird set of sound treatments that sounded for a long time like tuning up until you realized they were actually playing. Bates was extremely critical of most of the bands that had preceded Eyeless: "All these bands here today are so traditional, so conventional. They've all got bass, drums and a guitar. They look like the first rock groups. They sound like the first rock groups. This isn't the future. This is the end of the world." Eyeless are amateurs— they have no use for the music business and spend their daytime as a hospital worker and a lab technician, so they put their money where their mouths are. And while they added an interesting moment to Futurama III, chances are you'll never hear about them again.

With only a half dozen bands left to play, the crowd was starting to buzz in anticipation of the band most responsible for bringing people out, Bow-Wow-Wow. You could tell Bow-Wow was the draw by the way the crowd began to sport pirate hats and other buccaneer gear associated with this group. The stage on which Bow-Wow-Wow was to play drew a crowd while the previous set by Richard Strange was still in progress. Strange benefited from the sameness of much of the other music. A cheap blues progression sounded great after the noisome thrashings that preceded it, and it was amazing just to hear a saxophone. Strange, who might have seemed glib and old hat were it not for his trendy credentials as the sponsor of the "new romantics" hot spot Cabaret Futura, was canny enough to work the crowd where so many of his predecessors merely ranted at it. But it took **Bow-Wow-Wow** to excite the

But it took Bow-Wow-Wow to exceed kind of response that great rock 'n' roll moments are made of. The surging double-time drums and the lithe sexual exuberance of teen star Annabella evoked near hysteric response and prompted the only mass dancing display of the festival. Despite the one-pace nature of the band's delivery and the unsettling feeling that the exchange was closer to cheerleading at a football game than the kind of power Ludus displayed, Bow-Wow-Wow certainly proved them selves to be a band for the future.

It was no prize to have to follow such a hot act while most of the crowd was hightailing it toward the beer tent, but when these two weird guys came out onstage and did this

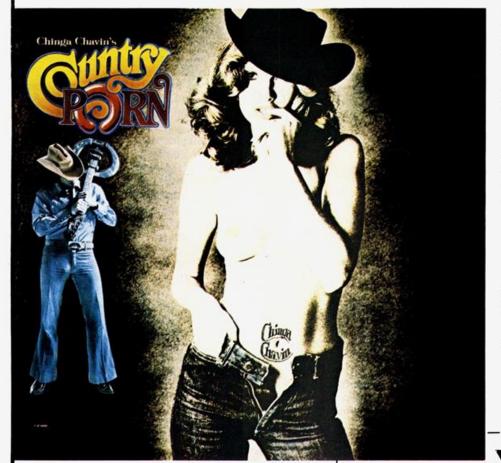
amazingly bizarre version of "I'm So Tired" the whole event arrived at its most surrealistic point. This turned out to be an appropriate warm-up for an Irish band called the Virgin Prunes who came on with the gross-out potential of the early Fugs (I kid you not!). As strange, Satanic Majesties Request-style synthesizer music droned out of the background, two guys in caveman suits came onstage, one carrying a club, the other a long pole, and while the music smacked on they engaged in a mock battle, spitting chewed-up bread at each other, wrestling, swinging their weapons, and then finally reaching a truce that climaxed with them crouching on the stage, motionless, while the music stopped. This whole thing seemed to go by in a flash, but the promoter, claiming that the band had exceeded their allotted time slot by over a half hour, pulled the plug on them to the irate shouts of a suddenly interested crowd. "If you want us to play, tell the promoter. He doesn't want us to," said one of the Prunes, and the ensuing crowd riot threatened to end Futurama III on the spot. So the band returned and played a song without lights while the PA was blasting out canned music which all but drowned out the lead singer as he screamed, "Fuck you, you bloody cunts, fuck fuck fuck." The audience roared with delight.

Promoter John Keenan blamed the Virgin Prunes for the chaos that followed the band's set. As Simple Minds played a very good but somewhat anticlimactic set, Keenan fumed that two bands, Doll By Doll and Modern Eon, pulled out of the lineup after the Prunes set. "At the time I was dealing with money, paying people out. The people running the stage didn't want to pull the plugs until they got my decision. When I found out, I dashed out straightaway and told them to pull the plugs. Doll By Doll were meant to go on after Simple Minds, but all I could offer them at that time was a spot afterwards. Modern Eon didn't want to go on after Simple Minds either."

So Futurama III ended in chaos, with the promoter wanting to skewer the **Virgin Prunes** and most everybody else just wanting to go home. Personally, I had a fairly good time, although I'm not sure I'd try again next year.

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regarded as the Bay area's most significant cultural contribution since the Grateful Dead."—Howard Klein "Country Music Magazine"

INTERVIEW: BUKOWSKI

continued from page 36

ride a bicycle without thinking about sex? Am I an impure person because I don't think about sex? Is my mind wrong because I don't have a hard-on fifty percent of the times? I have nothing against fucking, but I think it can be overpriced.

People think that I am fixated with sex. I fucked, I fucked well and I wrote well about fucking, but this doesn't mean it's very important. I fucked a lot of women, I fucked and I drank, I drank and I sexed, and I discovered, drinking and sexing, that it is not that big of a deal.

People want to come here, and they say, "Hey, Bukowski, let's get drunk, I am bringing some whores over." I am not interested: "Hey, I don't want your whores." They think it's important. I didn't say it. It's just because I write good stuff on sex, but I could have written as well about frying eggs, except I didn't.

HIGH TIMES: What can you tell me about this book on childhood that you're writing now?

BUKOWSKI: Three-quarters finished; my editor says it's the best thing I have ever written. But it's not finished. It's a horror story, and it has been harder to write than the others. Because it's so serious, I have tried to make it a little funny, to cover the horror of my childhood.

HIGH TIMES: Was it a horror story?

BUKOWSKI: Oh, yes. Capital *H*. Why? Have you ever been beaten with a strap, three times a week, from the age of six to the age of eleven? Do you know how many beatings that is?

HIGH TIMES: Was it your father?

BUKOWSKI: Yes. But, see, this has been a good literary training. Beating me with that strap taught me something.

HIGH TIMES: What did it teach you?

BUKOWSKI: How to type.
HIGH TIMES: What's the link?

BUKOWSKI: The link is, when they beat you long enough and hard enough you have the tendency to say what you really mean; in other words, they take all the pretenses out of you. If you can get out of it, whatever is still there is usually something genuine. Anyone who gets severe punishment during childhood can get out of it quite strong, quite good, or can end up being a rapist, a killer, end up in a madhouse or lost in all kinds of different directions. So you see, my father was a great literary teacher: He taught me the meaning of pain—pain without reason...

HIGH TIMES: Is this perhaps the reason you write in isolation, without contacts with people? And is that why you write?

BUKOWSKI: Certainly nobody knows why they became writers. I am only saying that my father has taught me a lesson in life, taught me certain aspects of life, of people. And these people exist; I meet them every day as I am driving my car on the freeway. HIGH TIMES: What kind of people?

BUKOWSKI: I am on the freeway, in the fast lane, behind somebody. He goes fifty miles an hour. I swing around him, I try to pass him, he goes sixty. I go sixty-five, and he pushes on the gas pedal. There is something in the human race which is very petty, very bitter. I see it from the way people drive on the freeway. When somebody wants to pass me, I put on the brakes, I let him go. The human race isn't very much.

HIGH TIMES: Did you always feel that way? BUKOWSKI: It hasn't improved. I didn't notice any change. In one of my poems I wrote: "Humanity, you never had it from the beginning." I see no reason to alter that line.

"When I am satisfied, it's all over. Sometimes it's only three or four seconds, and there is never any foreplay."

HIGH TIMES: I assume you've done a lot of reading...

BUKOWSKI: Between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four I must have read a whole library. I ate books for dinner. My father used to say at eight o'clock in the evening: "Lights out!" He had the idea that we had to go to bed early, get up early and get ahead in the world by doing a good job at whatever you were doing-which is complete bullshit. I knew that, but these books were so much more interesting than my father. In fact, they were the opposite of my father: These books had some heart, had some gamble. So when he said, "Lights out," I would take a little light in my bed, put it under the covers and read, and it would get suffocating under there and hot, but it made each page I turned all the more glorious, like I was taking dope: Sinclair Lewis, Dos Passos, these are my friends under the covers. You don't know what these guys meant to me; they were strange friends. I was finding under the apparent brutality people that were saying things to me quietly; they were magic people. And now when I read the same guys I think that they weren't so good.

HIGH TIMES: Do you ever see other writers? BUKOWSKI: Why go see another writer? What's there to say? There is nothing to be said; there are only things to be done. Talking with another writer is like drinking water in the bathtub: You don't do it. Do you ever drink water in the bathtub? No, you see? I drink wine in the bathtub.

HIGH TIMES: Is there any living writer you respect?

BUKOWSKI: There are a couple, but it's better if I don't see them, when I am drinking. The majority of them would start talking about their work. They don't say, "My wife broke her arm yesterday." They say things like "I am working on a sonnet" or "I am going to New York." They talk shop.

HIGH TIMES: What about their books?

BUKOWSKI: I don't like the way they wear their clothes, I don't like their shoes and I don't like their books. I don't like their tone of voice. I don't like the way they puke after three drinks. Writers are very despicable people. Plumbers are better, used car salesmen are better; they are all more human than writers. Writers become human only when they sit at the typewriter; then they can become good or even exceptional. Take them away from their typewriter and they become pricks. [Intensely:] I am a writer.

HIGH TIMES: Yet you don't think that of yourself.

BUKOWSKI: No. Because I worked in a factory, I became tame. I didn't become a writer until I was fifty, so I had the time to live in a different area of existence. That life helped me to maintain myself—can I use the word sane? normal? Somehow it doesn't seem the right word. I mean, it gave me a certain...naturalness. That's the word I am looking for: naturalness.

HIGH TIMES: When did things change in your life? When did the time of *Post Office* and *Women* stop?

BUKOWSKI: Nothing stopped. Another one worried about my soul! You know, At one time when people came by they used to see me in this tiny room full of beer cans, and getting up and going to the bathroom and vomiting, and I come out, light a cigarette, drink another beer—they thought I had a soul!

HIGH TIMES: And I bet they were very selfsatisfied in seeing you feel horrible and sick. That's the image people have of Hank Chinaski.

BUKOWSKI: But I was having soul for them, and I was having it for me, too. It's okay, I understand. I was a tough guy. Now I am soft, mellow, I smile. I just want to live calmly with a decent woman, drinking together, watching TV, taking a walk...

HIGH TIMES: So no more of all these women in your life?

BUKOWSKI: I am not saying that. Basically I have always been a loyal jerk. Every woman I lived with, even a whore, I have had a damn sense of loyalty and honesty with; and I wish everybody would have it, because it would make the world easier.

HIGH TIMES: What do you think this loyalty is based on?

BUKOWSKI: I guess it's based on other people's disloyalty—the ugliness of it. I don't want to be the first liar. I don't know where it comes from. I don't have any religion. To be good is better than being anything else if there is no choice. You don't have to be a Christian; it's not an obligation. Just to be good is an easy concept. It makes everybody feel better when I am being good. On

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the other hand, I admire evil people who can be original and strike out into new areas; but the kind of evil people I like are those who don't betray one person but those who cut through the beliefs of many people who are ignorant and just start new trends of thinking. There is a difference between two people fucking each other up and one person fucking the whole world with an original concept. Anybody strong like Hitler is going to be hated for centuries, but they are going to talk about him, make movies about him long after those who gathered together to conquer him subsided from human consciousness. Because it took some balls to crack through the morals of central understanding. I think this is okay if you can do it on a grand scale. If you can betray and kill all humanity, that is grand; but if you lie to the person you are living with, that's shit. Because it doesn't take any guts to do one, and it takes courage and originality to do the other.

HIGH TIMES: I heard that they are teaching you in some universities, that they are using your books as textbooks: the poems, *Factotum*. How do you feel about it?

BUKOWSKI: That doesn't make me feel good. It means you are safe enough to teach. If they say so I think maybe I must step on the gas pedal a little bit more. I don't want people to catch up with me: I want a big space between them and me.

HIGH TIMES: So you go around universi-

ties, occasionally, or you give a poetry reading once in a while. What do you do every day?

BUKOWSKI: I get up, I go to the track, I come back tired, I am too tired to type. Then Linda comes home from the store, and she is tired, we are sitting here. So I say, "Well, we might as well have a little drink!" Then after dinner she does her store figures, I go upstairs, I start writing, every day the same thing. If you are asking me if my writing is still good, yes, it's still good.

HIGH TIMES: So it seems that the racetrack is the only thing that stayed out of the world you described.

BUKOWSKI: In other words, you say I'm at the racetrack and I'm not in the streets anymore, so you are worried about my soul? What do you think is changed? Living in a big house, having a nice car?

HIGH TIMES: I think it's a big change. To wake up in the morning and know for once how to pay the rent.

BUKOWSKI: What's the difference? One who does not have it is going to give it away to luxuries; one who has it is going to continue. So when you look back at what I have written from 1979 on you'll see whether I failed or made it. My guess is that I've made it. But my good luck is that it happened too much, too late, and I think...if I am not wise enough to know that at the age of sixty, I know very little. If I know very little, I deserve to fail, so we'll see.

THE HELENA STAR

continued from page 76

"Hmm...! Even so, tomorrow you'll have to tell them to be sure they can take all of it."

"Sf. And to bring the fuel tanks full. We're going to need it."



E GAZED INTO THE crisp, cold night. It was dark and clear, but that relentless cold persistently reminded us that the wait ahead of us would not be pleasant or easy.

Otherwise, the situation continued developing to-

ward the final rendezvous with no major mishaps.

On Saturday night we set our course a little higher with the intention of reaching our rendezvous point from west-northwest. It struck us as less likely to raise suspicions if we appeared to heil from the Far East or Alaska.

Our course was due east. We were just another boat heading for the strait. But after 11:00 P.M., things started to get hairy.

From east-southeast, at about a thirty-degree angle from us, there surged a mast on the horizon. That was nothing out of the ordinary and I watched it with the binoculars, routinely, assuming it was one of the ships leaving the strait for Japan or one of the Pacific Islands.

I pointed it out to Román as I handed him the binoculars: "It looks like a freighter departing; but I only see one mast."

The captain watched a few seconds and commented: "By its heading, it doesn't seem to be leaving the strait. It's coming in this direction..."

"Toward us?!"

The captain scowled and handed me the glasses:

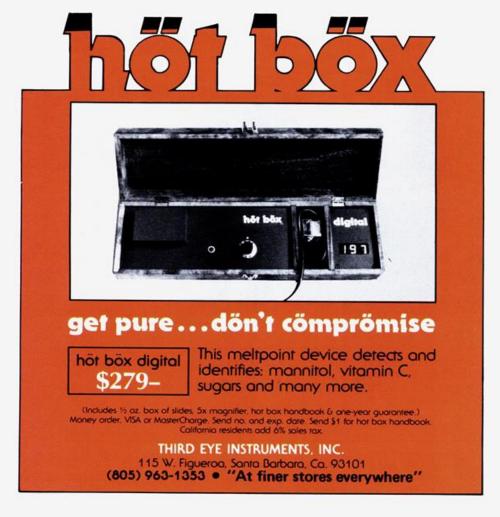
"¡Es la costera! It's the Coast Guard. Accelerate to normal speed."

Naturally, a ship sailing as slowly as we were might attract attention.

By this time, the helmroom had become populated. The first was Fernando, who came to report the "discovery" to us. Behind him came Emilio and Manuel, and finally, pale and trembling, Efrén. Román spoke to Emilio:

"It's the Coast Guard. Tell the others, and tell them all to stay at their posts without a lot of fanfare! Make everything look business as usual! And no gawking! They are going to pass by very close to our stern. Move!"

When the Coast Guard cutter had gotten a half mile from us, she reduced speed, permitting us to proceed, and she kept astern of us and off our port side. She adjusted her speed to the *Helena Star's* and very easily followed us at a distance of less than two hundred meters.



We turned on the radio and tuned in the international channel, waiting for the inevitable call.

Two or three minutes went by like that: with us sailing toward the strait and *them* escorting us a short distance.

Then, they called.

"Helena Star... Helena Star... This is the United States Coast Guard Yocona. Please acknowledge."

The captain picked up the microphone and answered:

"This is the Helena Star... Over."

"Good afternoon. This is the Yocona. What flag do you sail under, please?"

Román scowled again and I looked at the naked, flagless pole on the stern.

"British flag. Over."

"Thank you very much. What is your destination, please?"

They were very tenderly tying the noose around our neck (to give us a good yank later).

Again, in the neutral tone of before, Román answered:

"Victoria, Vancouver. Over."

"Thank you. Have a good trip. Yocona, clear."

As the Coast Guard cutter's silhouette dropped back, the crewmen invaded the helmroom again. Their expressions were of unbelieving surprise and they cheered wildly:

"¡Se van! ¡Se van!" yelled Fernando, like a fool.

"They are not going," I said sullenly. "We are the ones 'going'; they've got their eye on us, and if you keep shouting stupidities, they are going to come and ask you how they may be of service! They don't have to bother to follow us. At this rate, maybe some idiot will do something stupid and attract attention. From there, with their American spy stuff they can see a fly crapping on your nose!"

"Get back to your posts," Román said.
"Nothing can be done right now. Maybe they will go away later..."

OR MORE THAN TWO hours we played the same game: We sailed toward the Strait of Juan de Fuca and they remained on the horizon, watching us. No one could doubt they had adjusted their speed in order to keep at a steady distance without losing sight of us.

Roman and I tried to imagine what could be going on aboard the patrol boat. "We're on their radar. They've probably contacted Victoria for information. They are watching us until they find out for sure, so we don't escape."

"Do you think they were tipped off? I mean, do you suppose there was a lookout on us?"

The captain mulled the question over for a while. He must have already asked himself the same question, as everyone else

"I don't think so. Nobody knows where we were. And their catching us isn't going to do anyone else any good! No. It was just a damned coincidence that it was patrolling around here."

"We stretched our luck too far. We've been 'touring' the area too many days; and finally—"

I was interrupted by Román's gesture. He picked up the binoculars and looked through them again at our "vigilantes." He observed for a moment and then handed me the binoculars with a look of doubt. I, in turn, focused on the cutter and, despite myself, felt a surge of hope. It was evident that the *Yocoma* was easing off. On the horizon line, all we could see was her main mast.

Emilio returned to the bridge, excited:

"It looks like they've dropped back for real this time," was his hopeful comment.

But it couldn't be that easy. We were about fifteen miles from the strait, and the chances were that if the cutter's radar sank down under the horizon, other teams from the coast would relieve their watch.

Nevertheless, it was a possibility: Up to that moment, the clear sunny day had favored the Coast Guard; but now, a little to the southeast, a long curtain of low clouds laden with rain was approaching. It was no obstacle for the radar, but maybe (just maybe) we could make a run for it by hiding among other ships. After all, radar does not show color or details, and all the ships move on the screen.

An hour later we could no longer see the cutter and we were just a few miles from the buoy at the entrance to the strait.

Then Emilio appeared again:

"Bueno, Capitán. ¡Todo listo! All set. Just give the word and we'll sink her!"

The captain and I looked at each other as if to ask if the other had given such an order, but it was certain that this bright idea had nothing to do with our orders. Apparently, Emilio was only trying to implement a common practice in cases of emergency like this one: Sink the *marimba* ship and the telltale cargo with her, in the event nothing can be done to elude capture.

Emilio stood awaiting specific orders. Román begged the question, saying that we still had time for many things and that, at the necessary moment, we would sink her inside the strait, near the coast, and that way we would have a chance to reach land on one of the lifeboats and escape overland.

We went to the radio room and leaned over the marine chart of the vicinity. Román plotted a course which, from a few miles before the buoy at the entrance to the strait, extended southwest, taking us diagonally away from the strait. That course would put the rain between us and the Coast Guard; and maybe (again, just maybe) it would permit us to go on out to the ocean and flee.

A little after 6 P.M. we turned the ship around and pointed the bow southwest. We

headed straight into the rain and passed by two ships headed for the strait.

The raw cold made itself felt again, especially by Román and me, who had not eaten at all since early morning.

We almost made it through the rain curtain when we were fast-frozen by a fateful forewarning: A plane flew conspicuously low over us, for a significant interval, as if to let us know our strategy had failed.

But we kept on; we had already exposed ourselves by veering off the course that would have taken us to Victoria, British Columbia. If the Coast Guard were watching us on radar (and of course they were), they already knew we had no intention of entering the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

We were fleeing.

We kept running southwest through sporadic rainfalls, cold and tension. We had only our running lights on and little by little we were gaining distance from the "critical zone."

Manuel showed up in the helmroom with a suggestion, which, after beating around the bush for a while, he was able to express clearly:

"I know it's hard, but since there is no chance anymore...I thought that...How can I say it?...We could start throwing the macoña into the water!...We can slit each bag so they'll sink and we'll throw them in one by one...Don't you think, Capitán...I mean...It's an idea..."

Sure it was! And in my opinion, a very good one.

After all, the cargo was the worst evidence against us, and if we could deep-six it, maybe things wouldn't go so bad.

"That can be done," Román said, after considering it for a moment. "But we've got to wait a little longer; we are still too close and the bags that don't sink could reach the beaches... And it would cause a big stink; the local press would press hard... Let's wait a little longer."

And another hour went by.

Then it was Fernando who broke in, alarmed, with a shaken Efrén as escort:

"¡Ahí están otra vez! There they are again!"

We went out to the flying bridge. And there, in fact, behind us at quite a distance, we could make out the lights of a ship following our course.

There was nothing we could do about it. We kept sailing toward the ocean, aware of the menacing presence of the *Yocona*, at times visible and at times obscured by the downpours, but ever aware that they were out there and biding their time.

Around midnight, the generating plant went AWOL again and left us in the dark for about twenty minutes. (Weeks later, a Coast Guard officer would testify in court that we had sailed without lights in order to elude capture.) The truth is that by that time it was no longer a question of whether they would stop us or not but, rather, of when and where they would do it. Our maximum speed fluctuated around seven



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As it turned out, they were waiting for an appropriate time to stage a luxurious pageant planned for the reporters of the Washington media.

First came the planes, flying low, back and forth over the *Helena Star*. One of them, with the rear of the fuselage open, merrily took pictures of the ship. They flew so low we could see the photographer.

Then a helicopter from the *Yocona* followed suit, and flew over the ship from all angles, also taking front-page pictures.

Meanwhile, the Yocona let herself be seen a little more on the horizon, but she still kept her distance. I went to the radio room, convinced that there was nothing we could do except to wait for them to approach and seize us.

The air show seemed to indicate that that moment was quite near.

I turned on the loran and fixed our position; we were more than one hundred and forty miles from the coast.

Román called out from the helmroom:

"¡Ahora sí, ahí vienen! This is it; here they come!"

I looked out the small windows of the radio room. The *Yocona* was approaching full speed, raising two great waves of foam athwart her bow. Simultaneously, one of the planes flew over us, almost clipping the *Helena Star's* mast, and dropped a smoke bomb in front of our bow.

"What are they shooting at us?" whined Fernando.

"It's a smoke signal," Román said, "for us to stop."

I looked at him questioningly. I knew there was nothing else to be done, but he was the captain and it was his place to give the order.

He shrugged his shoulders slightly and with a look of infinite resignation he indicated I should heave to.

The Helena Star rocked, waiting for the powerful Yocona as she approached until she hove to by our starboard side, about fifty meters away. The captain went out to the bridge and waited. Bocachico was still standing at the now idle wheel; the rest of the crew piled up at the deck rail. I slid slowly to the bridge and then, from the Coast Guard vessel, a voice deformed by the megaphone spoke in English.

Román translated for everybody:

"He says they are going to inspect the ship; that nobody should do anything against the officers that are coming, because any hostile act will be considered an attack upon representatives of the United States government..." And so on in that vein.

Finally, Román ordered the crew to gather on deck, above the hold, so that we could be watched easily from the *Yocona*. Only the captain and the helmsman on duty

were left on the bridge.

While we waited above the hold, two small boats were lowered from the cutter and they headed for the *Helena Star*. The tiny party boarded the ship and took up combat positions with a grand display of automatic weaponry. The officers scattered rapidly throughout the ship; two went up to the bridge and others entered the engine room, most likely to make sure that the captured vessel would not sink them in their boots.

As I learned later, in the helmroom they asked Román for the ship's papers, which the captain hunted for in his stateroom. An expired certificate showed that the ship had sailed under a British flag until the final registry could be made. The Coast Guard officers said they needed to confirm the ship's registration number. This international registration number is generally inscribed along the keel in the hold in ships.

Obviously, the number was not a burning issue for the Coast Guard team, but they were intensely interested in getting into the hold. They rummaged around a good while looking for a way to get into the hold without removing the canvas. Finally, they took Fernando and Efrén forward and motioned to them to lift the canvas and open the hold. One on each side, the two terrorized crewmen, under M-16 barrels, lifted an edge of the tarp.

Condorito, who was shivering from cold next to me at the other end, muttered: "¡Pendejos!..." ("Sniveling asses!").

One of the officers went down into the hold and was there several minutes; when he came back out, everyone watched him closely.

From the helmroom, the officer in charge of the *Yocona*'s boarding party looked out the window to ask something and he received the answer, which, this time, I understood clearly:

"The test is positive!"

The weapons of the guards on deck and on the bridge were cocked in unison and the soldiers seemed to be cocked, too. They seemed to have assumed that, because they had found the marijuana, the eight of us would attack them.

The officer who had asked the question smiled, unable to conceal his satisfaction, and he communicated the news to the *Yocona* with his portable radio.

On the Yocona, the information was received with cheering, audible across the water, that seemed to indicate that everybody was delighted that the Helena Star was transporting untold tons of marijuana.

Later, with a certain solemnity, they brought Román deckside, near us, and while it began to pour down rain, the head of the boarding party officially advised us that we were arrested for transporting a Schedule One Controlled Substance in American law.

We were one hundred forty-two miles off the coast of the United States, and the Helena Star's voyage had ended. □

MY WAR OF 1939

continued from page 40

"I'll stand," I said.

"Two bits," said Delmore.

They came on in and around and then I said, "Two bits and up two bucks."

Delmore dropped out, Jimmy dropped out. Fastshoes looked at me: "What else do you see besides City Hall when you stick your neck out the window?"

"Just play your hand. I'm not here to chat about the gymnastics of the scenery."

"All right," he said, "I'm out."

I scooped in the pot and gathered their cards, leaving mine face down.

"What did ya have?" asked Fastshoes.

"You'll pay to see or else you weep forever," I said, sweeping my cards into the deck and mixing them together, shuffling them, feeling like Gable before he got weakened by God that time. The time of the earthquake...

The deck changed hands but I kept being lucky, most of the time. It was aircraft payday. You never bring a lot of money where a poor man is: He can only lose what little he has; on the other hand, it is mathematically possible that he might consume whatever you bring with you. What you do with money and the poor is never let them get close to each other.

Somehow I felt that the night was mine. Delmore tapped out and left.

"Fellows," I said, "I've got an idea. Cards are too slow. Let's just match coins, ten bucks a toss, odd man wins."

"Okay," said Jimmy.

"Okay," said Fastshoes.

The whiskey was gone. We were into a bottle of my cheap wine.

"All right," I said, "flip the coins high! Catch them on your palms. And when I say 'lift,' we'll check the results."

We flipped them high. Caught them.

"Lift!" I said.

I was odd man. Shit. Twenty bucks, just like that.

I jammed the tens into my pocket.

"Flip!" I said. We did.

"Lift!" I said.

I won again.

"Flip!" I said.

"Lift!" I said.

Fastshoes won.

I got the next.

Then Jimmy won.

I got the next two.

"Wait," I said, "I've got to piss!"

I walked over to the sink and pissed. We had finished the bottle of wine. I opened the closet door. "I got another bottle of wine here," I told them.

I took most of the bills out of my pocket and threw them into the closet. I came out, opened the bottle, poured drinks around.

"Shit," said Fastshoes, looking into his wallet, "I'm almost broke."

"Me too," said Jimmy.

"I wonder who's got the money?" I asked. They weren't very good drinkers; mixing the wine and the whiskey was bad for them. They were weaving a bit.

Fastshoes fell back against the dresser knocking an ashtray to the floor. It broke in half

"Pick it up," I said.

"I won't pick up shit," he said.

"I said, 'Pick it up!'"

"I won't pick up shit."

Jimmy reached down and picked up the broken ashtray.

"You guys get out of here," I said.

"You can't make me go," said Fastshoes.

"All right," I said, "just open your mouth one more time, just say one word and you won't know your head from your asshole!"

"Let's go, Fastshoes," said Jimmy.

I opened the door and they filed past. I followed them down the hall to the head of the stairway. We stood there.

"Hank," said Jimmy, "I'll see you again. Take it easy."

"All right, Jim..."

"Listen," Fastshoes said to me, "you..."

I shot a straight right into his mouth. He fell back down the stairway, whirling and bouncing. He was about my size: six feet and one eighty and you could hear the sound of him crashing for a block. Two Filipinos and the landlady were in the lobby. They just looked at Fastshoes lying there but they didn't move toward him.

"You killed him!" said Jimmy.

He ran down the stairway and turned Fastshoes upward. Fastshoes had a bloody nose and mouth. Jimmy held his head. Jimmy looked up at me.

"That wasn't right, Hank . . . "

"Yeah, whatya gonna do?"

"I think," said Jimmy, "that we're going to have to come back and get you..."

"Wait a minute," I said.

I walked back to my room and poured myself a tall glass of wine. I hadn't liked Jimmy's paper cups and I had switched to drinking out of a used jelly glass. The paper label was still on the side, stained with dirt and wine. I walked back out.

Fastshoes was reviving. Jimmy was helping him to his feet. Then he put Fastshoes's arm around his neck. They were standing there

"Now, what did you say?" I asked.

"You're an ugly man, Hank. You need to be taught a lesson..."

"You mean I'm not pretty?"

"I mean, you act ugly...You got it coming..."

"Take your friend out of here before I come down there and finish him off!"

Fastshoes raised his head. He had on a flowered Hawaiian shirt, only now many of the colors were in the wrong place.

He looked at me. Then he spoke. I could barely hear him. But I heard it. He said, "I'm going to kill you..."

"Yeah," said Jimmy, "we'll find you..."

"YEAH, FUCKERS?" I screamed. "I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE! ANYTIME YOU WANT TO FIND ME I'LL BE IN ROOM 5! I'LL BE WAITING! ROOM 5,

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GOT IT? AND THE DOOR WILL BE OPEN!"

I lifted the jelly glass full of wine and drained it straight down. Then I hurled that jelly glass down at them. I threw the son of a bitch, hard. But my aim was bad. It hit along the side of the stairway wall, shot off and fired into the lobby between the landlady and her two Filipino friends.

Jimmy turned Fastshoes toward the exit door and began slowly walking him out of there. It was a tedious, agonizing journey. Then I barely heard Fastshoes again, half moaning, half weeping, "I'll kill him . . . I'll kill him...'

Then Jimmy had him out of the doorway. They were gone.

The landlady and the two Filipinos were still standing in the lobby, looking up at me. I was barefooted, and five or six days without a shave. I needed a haircut. I only combed my hair, once, in the morning, then didn't bother. My gym teachers had always been on me about my posture: "Get your shoulders back! Why are you looking at the ground? What's down there?"

I would never set any styles. My white T-shirt was stained with wine, burned with cigarette holes, or maybe cigar holes; spots of blood and puke...It was too small, it hung high exposing my gut and belly button. And my pants were too small. They gripped tightly to me and they rose well above my ankles.

The three of them stood down there and looked at me. I looked down at them: "Hey, you guys, come on up for a little drink!"

The two little guys just looked up at me and grinned. The landlady, that Mae West, she just looked impassive. Mrs. Kansas, they called her. She could be in love with me? Dressed in light pink heels and a long black hourglass sparkling dress, little chips of light rising toward me. And her breasts were something that any average mortal would never see totally-they were for kings, dictators, rulers, Filipinos.

'Anybody got a smoke?" I asked. "I'm out of smokes:

The little dark fellow on the right-hand side of Mrs. Kansas made a slight flipping motion with his hand toward his jacket pocket and a pack of Camels loped through the lobby air. He caught the pack in his other hand and with an invisible tap of a finger upon the bottom of the pack-a smoke leaped up, tall and true, singular and exposed, ready to be taken . . .

"Hey, shit, thanks," I said.

I started down the stairway, made a misstep, almost fell, grabbed the banister, righted myself, readjusted my perceptions and walked on down. I walked up to the little guy holding the pack. I bowed, slightly. Then straightened.

I lifted out the Camel. Then I gave it a flip into the air, caught it, stuck it into my mouth. My little dark friend remained expressionless. The grins had stopped when I had begun down the stairway. My friend leaned a bit forward, cupped his hands and lit my smoke.

I inhaled, exhaled..."Listen, you guys, why don't you come up to my place and we'll have a couple of drinks?"

"No," said the little guy who had lit my cigarette.

"Maybe we can catch the Bee or some Bach on my radio...I'm educated, you know. I'm a student..."

"No," said the other little guy.

I took a big drag on my smoke, then looked over at Mae West Mrs. Kansas.

Then I looked back at my two friends.

"She's yours. I don't want to bother. She's yours. Just come on up. We'll drink a little wine. In good old room 5."

There wasn't any answer. I rocked on my heels a bit as the whiskey and the wine fought for possession. I let my cigarette dangle a bit from the right side of my mouth as I sent up a plume of smoke, still holding the cigarette dangling, like that.

I knew about the stilettos. In the little time I had been there I had seen two enactments of the stiletto-a bit afterwards. from my window at night while looking out at the sound of sirens: a body there just below my window on the Temple Street sidewalk, under moonlight, under streetlight. Two bodies, but each upon a separate night of the stiletto. Once a big white guy, another time one of theirs. Each time, blood running on the pavement, real blood, just like that, much of it just going across the pavement and into the gutter and you could see it going along the gutter, meaningless, dumb...that so much blood could come from just one body . . .

"All right, my friends," I said to them, "no hard feelings. I'll drink alone..."

I turned and started to walk toward the stairway.

"Mr. Chinaski," I heard the sound of Mrs. Kansas's voice.

I turned and looked at her, flanked by my two little friends.

"Just go to your room and sleep. If you cause any more disturbances, I will phone the Los Angeles police force.

I turned and walked back up the stairway.

No life anywhere, no life in this town or this place or this time...

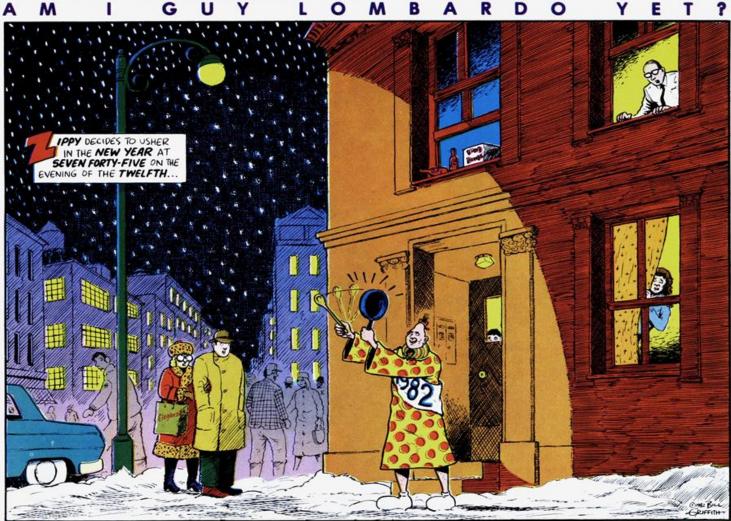
My door was open. I walked in. There was one-third of a cheap bottle of wine left.

Maybe there was another bottle in the closet?

I opened the closet door. No bottle. But there were tens and twenties everywhere. There was a twenty down there, just rolled upon the top of a pair of dried-out and dirty stockings, holes in toes, and up there upon a shirt shoulder, a ten dangling, and here upon an old jacket, another ten caught halfway into a side pocket. Most of the money was upon the floor.

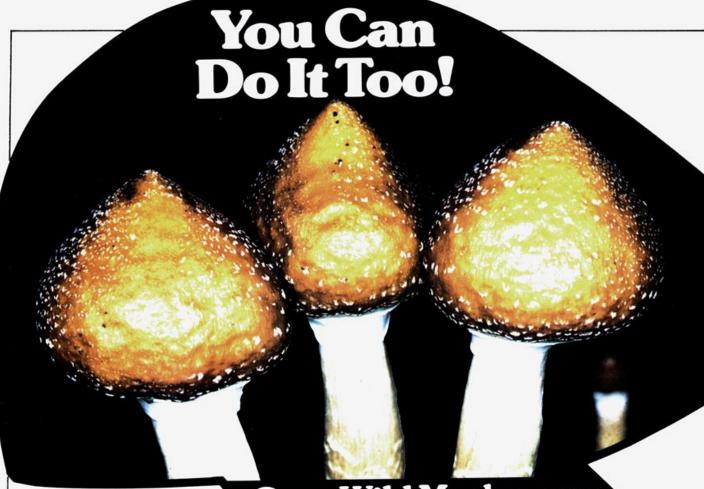
I picked up a ten, slipped it into the front pocket of my pants, went to the door, closed and locked it, then went down the stairway to the bar just to the right. I walked on in...











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